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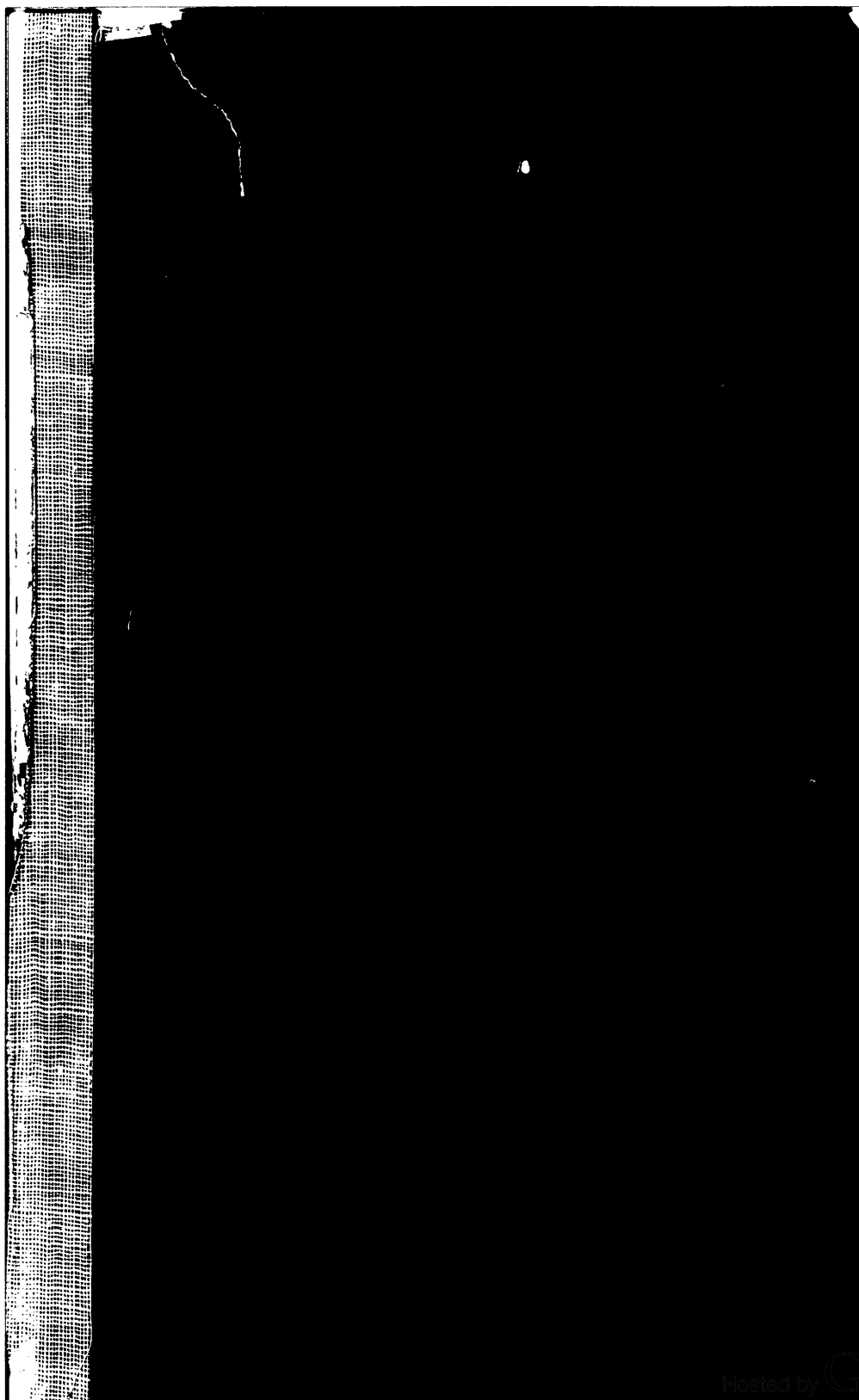
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PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
DUC DE BROGLIE.

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PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS
OF THE LATE
duc de Broglie
DUC DE BROGLIE.

1785—1820.

Translated and Edited
BY
RAPHAEL LEDOS DE BEAUFORT.

‘Ecce enim breves anni transeunt et semitam per quam non revertabar embulo.’
JOB xvi. 23.

WITH A STEEL PORTRAIT OF THE DUC DE BROGLIE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

LONDON:
WARD AND DOWNEY,
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1887.

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Dedicated
WITH PERMISSION TO
J. VERNON WHITAKER, Esq.,
IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF KIND INTEREST SHOWN TOWARDS
THE TRANSLATOR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE growing favour with which the public receives autobiographies inspires the hope that this translation may be read with interest.

The illustrious name of the author of the ‘Recollections,’ the exalted position he occupied, the historic events he passes in review, the personages—English and foreign—he portrays, and the prominent share he took in establishing in France a governmental system based upon the Parliamentary institutions of this country, impart peculiar value to his ‘Souvenirs.’

The late Duc de Broglie was the most perfect type of the nobleman of old : strictly honourable, possessed of high culture and sound judgment, a slave to propriety and etiquette, he was liberal-minded—though by no means democratic—and the sworn enemy of every form of despotism and tyranny. In these ‘Recollections’ he always displays the utmost impartiality, whether he discusses the acts of Napoleon or those of Louis XVIII.,

of Charles X. or of Louis Philippe. It is a cause of regret that death should have prevented the completion of his Memoirs. Indeed, the work closes at a most interesting period, that of his administrative career, the recital of which would have offered a most instructive study. However, as it is, it will, I venture to submit, amply repay the trouble of a perusal.

This translation is, I know, full of shortcomings—which it is now too late to remedy. The nature of the work itself had suggested the introduction of numerous notes, which have unfortunately been left out. If, however, my work is fortunate enough to pass into a second edition, I hope to be able to include the omitted notes.

RAPHAËL LEDOS DE BEAUFORT.

LONDON, *September*, 1887.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

ACHILLE CHARLES LEONCE VICTOR, Duc de Broglie, the author of these 'Recollections,' was born in Paris on the 28th of November, 1785. His father was Victor-Claude, Prince de Broglie, born in 1757, who in 1782 joined the Army Corps sent to the help of the United States, under the command of the Marquis of Rochambeau, and was subsequently promoted to the rank of Maréchal de Camp, and sent in that capacity to the Army of the Rhine. Being, at first, favourable to the principles of the French Revolution, he was elected by the Bailliage of Colmar to the Assemblée Constituante. But his name and spirit of independence having aroused the suspicion of the Jacobins, he was on various occasions arrested, then released by the orders of the Revolutionary tribunal. Having, however, refused to acknowledge the decree which, after August 10, proclaimed that King Louis XVI.

had forfeited his crown, he was again arrested, tried, and sentenced to be guillotined, and executed on Messidor 9, year II. (June 27, 1794).

Victor-François, Duc de Broglie, Marshal of France, victor of Corbach, Governor of the Three Bishoprics (Metz, Toul, and Verdun), born in 1718, was the father of the unfortunate Prince de Broglie. He is regarded by Jomini as the only one amongst French generals who gave proofs of constant ability during the War of Seven Years. When the Revolution broke out, he took refuge in Germany, and received the command of the first corps of *émigrés* who fought in Champagne in 1792; he successively served against France in the ranks of the English and Russian troops, and died at Münster in 1804. He is the author of a curious series of memoirs concerning the various incidents of the Seven Years' War.

Prince Victor-Claude de Broglie had married Mademoiselle de Rosen, sole heiress to the name and estates of the Rosen family, a family of considerable importance in Sweden, whence it came and established itself in Alsace at the close of the Thirty Years' War and the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia. When Prince de Broglie was arrested for the last time, his wife had to share the same fate, and was sent with

him to the prison at Vesoul. She would in all probability have shared her husband's doom, but for the devotion of an old and faithful servant of the family who, at the risk of his own life, successfully managed to effect her escape and to see her safely across the Vosges mountains into Switzerland.

On her return to France, after the revolution of Thermidor, the young Princess de Broglie became the wife of M. d'Argenson, a gentleman of considerable means, of high culture, upright mind, lofty views, and rare sagacity. Having entered society in 1789, at a time when all ideas relating to reform and liberty were at a climax, and finding them in complete harmony with his noble and generous impulses, he not only openly advocated them, but carried them rather beyond their legitimate bearing. He nevertheless, and despite his socialistic tendencies, was a safe, reliable and devoted friend ; his judgment was unerring, and though a perfect gentleman, he was frank to a fault ; he hated hypocrisy, and could never lower himself to play the part of a courtier. Such was the man who brought up the author of these 'Recollections,' and became like a second father to him.

Under the direction of his stepfather, the Duc de Broglie did not receive the frivolous education usual

amongst young noblemen of the old *régime*, but, on the contrary, the solid and useful knowledge then given in the 'Écoles Centrales' of the Republic.

Having been exempted from military service on account of his short sight, at a time when every valid Frenchman was called upon to take up arms, young de Broglie, being anxious to serve his country, obtained in 1809 his appointment as *auditeur* to the 'Conseil d'État,' through the influence of his uncle, who was then Bishop of Acqui, and chaplain to the Emperor.

In that capacity he was entrusted with various missions to Illyria, to Spain, and to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which were then in the power of the French. After a stay of some duration in the capital ✓ of Poland, he was sent as private secretary to M. de Narbonne, then French plenipotentiary at the Congress of Prague.

Although he served the Emperor, he endured rather than he voluntarily submitted to his rule, the despotism of which was repugnant to his feelings of justice and to his ideas of constitutional government.

At the Restoration, in 1814, he was, owing to the disinterested efforts of his uncle Prince Amédée de Broglie, former aide-de-camp to the Prince de Condé, appointed to a seat in the newly-created House of Peers. Not having

as yet, however, reached the age of thirty appointed by law, he had to sit for more than a year as a silent member ; that is, he had to abstain from taking part in the debates. He was exactly thirty years old when the House of Peers constituted itself regularly into a Court of Justice, to decide upon the fate of the unfortunate ✓ Marshal Ney. In obedience to a most honourable motive, and although he was not strictly bound to take part in a debate already begun, he claimed the exercise of the right to which his age now entitled him. On the fatal night of December 4, 1815, he several times ascended the tribune and endeavoured in vain to save the illustrious ✓ Marshal from the doom that awaited him, and he was one of the few peers who voted against capital punishment.

From that day, and until the Revolution of July, he sat constantly on the benches of the Liberal opposition ✓ in the House, and combated firmly though with moderation the retrograde tendencies of the Restoration, the measures and the laws which brought discredit upon the name of the House of Bourbon and eventually lost his crown to Charles X. He displayed in those contests a grave and powerful eloquence, sometimes seasoned with cold and biting irony, and much ability in his method of argumentation, which secured for him the

reputation of having been one of the most eminent of French Parliamentary orators. The brilliant speeches he delivered at that time in defence of the liberty of the press are regarded as amongst the best specimens of his oratory.

✓ In 1817, he became acquainted with Royer-Collard, de Serre, Camille Jordan, de Barante, Guizot, and de Rémusat, the chiefs of the party known to history under the name of 'doctrinaire,' to whose efforts must be ascribed the progress of Liberal ideas, which in France, during the Restoration, paved the way for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.

The celebrated Madame de Staël was an old friend of Madame d'Argenson's ; the young Duc de Broglie was thus, at an early age, admitted to the favour of frequenting the select society which used to visit the famous authoress of 'Corinne,' and which was composed of the *élite* amongst the celebrities of the day.

When, after the flight of Charles X. to Rambouillet, in 1830, the Duke of Orleans was appointed *Lieutenant-général* of the Kingdom by the deputies assembled in Paris, the Duc de Broglie was selected to sit with Casimir Perier, Laffitte, Dupin and General Sebastiani in the Privy Council entrusted by the Duke of Orleans with the conduct of the affairs of the State, whilst the ordinary

business of the Government was in the hands of a provisional Ministry. This irresponsible position was, however, ill-suited to the political views of the Duc de Broglie, who, on the elevation of the Duke of Orleans to the throne, respectfully requested to be relieved from what to him was an irksome office. The King complied, but intimated his wish to see his former Councillor enter the Cabinet which was about to be formed. The Duc de Broglie chose the department of Public Worship, to which was annexed that of Public Instruction; besides which he was appointed President of the *Conseil d'État*.

After the fall of the Laffitte Ministry, the Duc de Broglie joined the Cabinet of October 11, 1832, of which he became Minister of Foreign Affairs; he, however, sent in his resignation on the occasion of the failure of the Bill relative to the United States indemnity. When, in 1835, the King decided to accept the resignation of the Ministry, in order to put a stop to the rivalry existing between M. Thiers and M. Guizot, the Duc de Broglie was entrusted with the formation of a new Ministry, in which he was offered the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This new Ministry only lasted a few months, and had to resign on the question of the conversion of the Rentes. Here ended the active political

career of the Duc de Broglie, and although, during the whole reign of Louis Philippe, he remained one of the leading spirits of the Doctrinaire Party, he did not enter any of the subsequent administrations.

The Revolution of 1848 found in him an irreconcilable and merciless adversary. Being imbued with a perhaps excessive admiration for the English constitution and for the predominance of the aristocratic element in Government and in society, he could not see without feelings of horrified indignation the breaking up of the legal oligarchy of the country by the masses violently forcing their way into political life through the breach of universal suffrage.

Indeed, he saw in this the destruction of the principles of Parliamentary rule and of the balance between the public powers, the annihilation of all the constitutional fictions upon which the Doctrinaire Party had based its political edifice, and which he, Duc de Broglie, regarded as the ideal of political philosophy and the highest expression of social progress.

After the *coup d'état* of 1851, and the proclamation of the Empire, the late Duc de Broglie strictly kept aloof from politics, and lived in the most complete seclusion, devoting all his time and energy to literary or philosophical pursuits. He died on February 25,

1870, at the very ripe age of eighty-four years, two months, and twenty-eight days, and was thus spared the grief of witnessing the third invasion and the dismemberment of his country, the interests of which were always paramount to him. For many years, he was a regular contributor to the *Revue Française*, the *Nain Jaune* (of which he was one of the founders), and other periodicals, for which he wrote a series of valuable papers on legislation, administrative organization, philosophy, religion, and literature. Amongst his essays the following may be mentioned as the most remarkable: 'Du Droit de Punir' ('On the Right of Punishment'), 'Sur la Peine de Mort' ('On Capital Punishment'), 'Sur les Peines Infâmantes' ('On Ignominious Punishment'), and his 'Traité sur l'Existence de l'Ame' (an 'Essay on the Existence of the Soul'), which is the refutation of the contrary thesis advanced by Broussais in his famous work entitled 'De l'Irritation de la Folie' ('On Mental Excitement and Derangement'). He also wrote an essay upon a translation of 'Othello' in French verse by M. Alfred Vigny, and another on the state of dramatic art in France in 1830. He was already a member of the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, when, in 1855, he was elected by the Académie Française to

the seat left vacant by the death of his friend, Count de Sainte-Aulaire, a distinguished historian, and father-in-law to M. Decazes, the Minister of Louis XVIII. The late Duc de Broglie also wrote an important work on political history, entitled 'Vues sur le Gouvernement de la France' ('Suggestions on the Government of France'), published after his death. His collected writings and speeches, comprising three volumes, were published in 1863.

Although the various acts of his administration as a statesman have not always secured unreserved approbation, he does not appear to have ever been actuated in his decisions by motives of personal interest or of ambition; and, whilst opposing his acts and his theories, his political opponents always professed the deepest respect and admiration for the integrity and the nobleness of his character.

On February 20, 1816, and despite the strong opposition of his family to what it considered a *mésalliance*, the Duc de Broglie had married the beautiful and gifted Mademoiselle Albertine Ida Gustavine de Staël, the daughter of the celebrated Madame de Staël, who was his junior by two years, having been born in 1797. 8?

The young Duchess de Broglie was as zealous a Protestant as her husband himself was sincere a

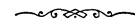
Catholic. Yet, notwithstanding the difference of their creeds, and their growing fervour in opposite directions, the most complete harmony never ceased to reign between them during the twenty years of their union. This suffices to give the highest opinion of the moral loftiness of that noble couple who, although of different creeds, furnished society with a striking instance of constant and unbroken conjugal love. The young Duchess had been brought up in the Methodist faith, and was imbued with its rigidity of principles. Her religious austerity was, nevertheless, toned down by her natural grace and the most exquisite kindness of heart. She was, in all that relates to moral or intellectual qualities, the daughter of her illustrious mother. She was, indeed, one of the most remarkable women of her time, both as regards the loftiness of her intellect and the moral beauty and purity of her character. Her physical charms were in thorough keeping with the superiority of her mind, and, like those of her mother, her *salons* were the meeting-place of not only the *élite* of fashionable and aristocratic society, but all the most eminent persons in arts, science, literature, and politics. She died at the early age of thirty-eight, in 1836. She left several daughters and a son, Jacques Victor Albert,

Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, the editor of the 'Recollections,' of which an English edition is now submitted to the public. Prince, now Duc Albert de Broglie, who was born in 1821, is, like his father, both a prominent statesman and a brilliant *littérateur*. He is the author of various important works, amongst which may be mentioned 'A History of the Church and of the Roman Empire in the Fourth Century.' In 1862, he was elected by the *Académie Française* to the seat left vacant by the death of Father Lacordaire. In 1871, he was sent as French Ambassador to the Court of Saint-James, by M. Thiers. Under the Government of Marshal MacMahon, he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, and afterwards President of the Council and Minister of the Interior. In May, 1877, he was again entrusted with the formation of a Cabinet, in which he was President of the Council and Minister of Justice. He is a member of the Senate since 1875. In politics, the present Duc de Broglie is a staunch Conservative, devoted to monarchical ideas, and strongly opposed to the tendencies of those who would wish to place illimited power in the hands of the masses.

RAPHAËL LEDOS DE BEAUFORT.

LONDON, *May*, 1887.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE DUC DE BROGLIE.



BOOK I.

1785—1809.

I.

1785—1791.

I WAS born in Paris on the 28th of November, 1785.

My grandfather was then Marshal of France, Knight of the King's orders, Governor of Metz and of the three bishoprics.* He had been out of favour since the close of the Seven Years' War.

‘Esteemed for his virtues, Marshal de Broglie was still living away from the Court, where he used to be seen only twice a year, and the errors and faults of which he was not afraid to be always denouncing. He was the Cincinnatus of modern times.’ These were the words of a man whose opinions my grandfather did not share.

* Under the old French monarchy, the Bishops of Metz, of Toul, and of Verdun, were temporal princes under the suzerainty of the King of France.

VOL. I.

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I am not quite sure that there was any striking likeness between my grandfather and Cincinnatus : he had neither laid aside the consular fascies nor turned his sword into a ploughshare. The envoy of the Roman Senate who might have met him clad in a hunting-dress, braided all over, surrounded by the nobility of the neighbourhood—wearing similar dresses, the gifts of the Marshal, for whose pleasure the forest at Broglie used to re-echo the cry of a hundred hounds and the gallop of fifty horses—would have formed rather a poor idea of his rustic simplicity. The truth is that he had been unjustly deprived of the favour of the Court, and, following the example of the proud patrician, he was very reasonably wroth at it.

My father, then scarcely thirty years of age, was Colonel of the Bourbonnais regiment and Knight of Saint Louis. Three years before—in 1782—he had joined the army corps sent to the help of the United States of America under the command of M. de Rochambeau. The expeditionary force having, shortly after landing, been detailed off to operate in Jamaica, my father followed his regiment ; and the fleet having been compelled through stress of weather to seek the shelter of Porto Cabello, on the South American coast, he seized the opportunity to make an excursion into the pro-

vince of Caracas. After the signing of peace he returned to France, stopping at San Domingo on the way.

A transcription from the account of his voyage is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale;* and from this Count de Ségur gave numerous extracts in his 'Souvenirs,' as did Monsieur de Rémusat also in the *Revue Française*. The original manuscript, entitled 'Journal de mon Voyage, commencé en avril, 1792, et qui finira ne sçais quand ni comment'† is in my possession.

This diary, though much more ample than the transcription of it, breaks off abruptly in the middle of a sentence. The narrative itself is original and curious. Through the thoughtlessness and joviality of a young officer, fresh from the salons of Versailles and the dissipations of Paris, it is easy to detect the penetration of a cultured soldier and shrewd observer. My father had prepared himself for that expedition by carefully studying the causes and progress of the quarrel between the United States and the mother-country. From him I possess on this subject and on the incidents of the

* The French National Library.

† 'Diary of my Voyage, begun in April, 1792, and which will end I know not when or how.'

war a brief but most faithful and complete record, to which he appended an account of the Confederate States as they existed in 1782.

My mother was sole heiress to the name and estates of the Rosen family, a family of considerable importance in Sweden, whence they came and established themselves in Alsace at the close of the Thirty Years' War and the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia. She was a woman of rare beauty and still rarer intellectual gifts, whose qualities and virtues were even superior to her physical and intellectual charms.

Although, since my father's return from America, there existed between him and my grandfather a strong difference of political views, my parents still lived at the Hôtel de Broglie, and there I spent the early years of my life.

I have preserved but a faint recollection of the Hôtel de Broglie and its vast gardens, its salons and the tapestry furniture; of my grandfather, his diminutive figure and his short wig; still, I could swear that his portrait, such as it is now to be seen at Broglie, in the first salon, is a perfect likeness of him. I have been told that in this very salon, when scarcely three or four years of age, I climbed up a screen to slap the face of the victor of Berghen and Corbach; but I do not

vouch for the truth of this anecdote, and I hope it is not true.

On the other hand, I have a very vivid recollection of our journeys to Saint-Rémy in Franche-Comté. My mother used to take us there—my sisters and myself—every year. Our great-grandmother, Madame de Rosen, always received us with kindness. I remember also very distinctly the two journeys I made to Strasbourg with my father. His uniform of Colonel—white, with purple facings—is present to my mind. On our second journey, having been promoted to the rank of Maréchal de Camp, his uniform was blue and gold.

About this time I was inoculated. The method was then beginning to be known. The minds of people were much divided—perhaps not without reason—respecting its usefulness and its danger. The decision taken by my parents on this occasion was considered, so I learned since, as the result of their ready inclination towards new ideas; and they were much blamed, I suppose, for having exposed in my person the heir of the elder branch of the family.

In 1789, my father having been sent to the Assemblée Constituante by the nobility of the *bailliage* of Colmar, my parents removed from the Hôtel de Broglie

to a small house in the Rue de Bourgogne. A tolerably complete collection of papers, notes, and particulars, entrusted to my father in the interest of the province of Alsace, will be found in my papers.

I have preserved no recollection whatever of the events of the 14th July, although I have still before my eyes a coloured sketch of the taking of the Bastille, given to me by my nurse. I have, therefore, retained no recollection of the various events which led to my grandfather being appointed to the command of the army assembled in the environs of Versailles, or of his leaving France—his emigration, so to speak—which it brought about. Marshal de Broglie, as related by M. Alex. de Lameth, was informed by his son, Prince de Broglie, and by me, that the Prince of Condé—then head of the Council—still following up the enmity which had existed between himself and my grandfather since the Seven Years' War, had appointed him to that command. The object of the prince was very simple. If those measures offered any danger they would fall on the Marshal, who would alone be compromised; if, on the contrary, they secured a success consistent with the wishes of the party, the Prince himself would reap the advantage. . . The Marshal deemed quite correct the information conveyed to him respecting the Prince of

Condé ; but he replied to the envoys that ‘ obedience to the King was a law which he had respected all his life ; that he anxiously hoped not to receive the orders sent to him, but that he should obey, if they came from the King.’

That he did, as everybody knows ; but what is not generally known is that he availed himself of the exalted position in which his obedience had placed him to give the King the wisest and most moderate advice. This the King himself testifies in the letter by which, after the 14th July, he authorized the Marshal to give up his command and to leave France. On a memorable occasion my father, whilst protesting against a decision of the National Assembly, affecting the misdemeanour of Marshal de Broglie, entered into minute details upon this subject, and quoted the very words of his father, without being contradicted.

Having left the Hôtel de Broglie and taken up their residence in the house they rented in the Rue de Bourgogne, my parents used to entertain at dinner, and often at evening parties, the leading members of the Assemblée Constituante, or, to speak more exactly, the members of the Left. My father was not one of the forty-seven deputies who joined the *tiers-état* on the 25th of June, 1789 ; but he was of those who,

regarding the injunctions of their mandate as an unsurmountable obstacle, expressed their regret at being unable to join the meeting.

I was only once present at a sitting of the Assemblée Constituante. I went there the day when my father presided over it. The sitting was very stormy. All I recollect of it is the noise, the shouts, and the calls to order. The bell which my father was constantly sounding is still ringing in my ears ; but that recollection, dim as it is, comes very fresh to my mind, whenever I gaze upon four prints which I placed in my study nearly thirty years ago. Of these prints, which face each other, one represents the Vow of Rutli ; another the Barons of England imposing the Magna Charta upon King John ; the third the Declaration of the Independence of the United States ; and the last, the Serment du Jeu de Paume. The history of free governments among modern nations may be read in these four great events ; the character of these nations, the fortunes of their governments, seem indelibly engraved upon the very forehead of their founders ; their attitude, their looks and gestures seem to proclaim them. From generation to generation, from father to son, from revolution to revolution, they all kept their word ; unfortunately, we Frenchmen are not the

least faithful to our original, seeing that when but a child I saw the outburst of the *Jeu de Paume* repeated without reason, and, in my maturer years, too often reproduced for the slightest cause.

During the two years which followed, the events which struck me most were—first, the sacking of the *Hôtel de Castries*. From our house we could hear distinctly the yells of the mob and the fall of the furniture which they threw from the windows. The second was the grand spectacle of the *Fête of the Federation*. I still see, in the midst of the excited people which thronged the *Champ de Mars*, the ladies wearing tricolour ribbons, and pretending to wield shovels and to wheel barrows. My mother was one of them. Then I remember the flight to *Varennes*. We were informed of it by my sisters' writing-master ; what he thought of it in his inmost soul I am unable to say, but his face was the very picture of consternation.

II.

1792—1800.

THE Assemblée Législative having succeeded to the Assemblée Constituante, my father re-entered the army. He became chief of the staff to the army of the Rhine, commanded by Marshal Lückner. Desaix,* then only a lieutenant, was his aide-de-camp. Marshal Saint-Cyr, at the beginning of his glorious career, was serving in that army. In the first volume of his Memoirs he speaks with praise of my father.

The situation was sad. My father's brothers and near relations had all emigrated. His own father had disowned him, and wished no more to hear his name mentioned in his presence. The Jacobins were violently attacking him; they surrounded and in a measure dominated Marshal Lückner, and ardently applied themselves to destroying the discipline of the army. My father ran great dangers whilst endeavouring to

* Afterwards a general of Napoleon I.

maintain order, and he had a narrow escape of being murdered by the regiment of which he had been Colonel. A few friends, among whom were the Mayor of Strasbourg, Dietrich, Rouget de l'Isle, the author of the 'Marseillaise,' and others whose names are less known, helped him in his endeavours.

Then came the 10th of August. My father protested against the decrees of the Legislative Assembly. He was dismissed the service, and retired, for the benefit of his health, to Bourbonne-les-Bains. His aide-de-camp, Desaix, shared his honourable disgrace. Those events are faithfully related in the life of that illustrious officer, published by M. Martha-Becker. They are fully explained in the defence which my father had prepared to read before the revolutionary tribunal.

This defence is based upon numerous *pièces justificatives* (documentary evidence). Mention is made of several arrests to which my father was subjected in 1792, but which had no result. Having been away from him during all the latter part of that year, I do not know anything more about him. Acting, indeed, upon his instructions, and doubtless from motives of security, my mother had taken our family to England, whence we soon returned, in order to avoid coming under

the laws which the new Government was daily aiming at emigrants. I have but a faint recollection of the short time we spent in the neighbourhood of London, with Madame de la Châtre, a friend of my mother, and her son, a young man of great promise, who since met with a glorious death at the attack of Port au Prince ; but I distinctly remember the precautions we had to take when returning to France. An English boat landed us, at night and in great secrecy, on the beach of Boulogne. I recollect the state of excitement in which we found the population, and which affected even our own servants. At Boulogne I was taken to the theatre, and there saw the performance of ‘ *La Mort de César.*’

My parents having met at Lamotte, a country-house near Arras, where we only resided a few months, my father was again arrested there, and almost at once set at liberty. I do not know under what pretext a warrant had been signed for his apprehension ; but I must say that the persons who executed it were decently dressed, and behaved like gentlemen, a fact which had already become rare.

Soon afterwards we started for Saint-Remy. My great-grandmother was dead ; Saint-Remy belonged to my mother, and there my sisters and I spent the

whole of the year 1793 and the first half of 1794. There my father was again arrested, taken to the prison at Gray, brought to Paris, and delivered into the hands of the revolutionary tribunal. There also my mother was arrested and sent to the prison of Vesoul, from which she fortunately escaped.

I remember much of the early days spent by my parents at Saint-Remy. I recollect the arrival of the orders for their arrest. These orders were not executed with force. In a small room, still present to my mind, which we used as dining-room, my parents consulted together, in my presence, as to whether they should obey the orders. They decided freely to do so.

How was such freedom possible in those days? I do not know. But I have no doubt as to the fact itself. My father having surrendered himself at Gray, and my mother at Vesoul, we were left, my sisters and I, to the care of servants. M. Ali, an excellent gentleman, resident at a place called Ormoy, a few leagues distant from Saint-Remy, kept me in his house for a few months. He had two nephews: one, fully grown, though still young, had already served as a volunteer at the siege of Luxembourg; the other was scarcely fifteen or sixteen years of age. For I know not what

family reason, one was named Trémolière, and the other Saint-Jules. The first was amiable and of a cultured mind ; Saint-Jules was still but a big child. I spent some happy days in that family, but the course of events separated me from it at a very early age. The family, as I learned, died out, fifty years after the time I speak of, in a modest and peaceful obscurity. Strange to say, in the village of Ormoy, no one could have suspected that we were living under the *régime* of the Terror.

During the month preceding the removal of my father to Paris, I was taken several times to Gray. A few days before his departure I saw him in his prison. I have it from M. Clément, a gentleman from Doubs, who met him on the way to Paris, conducted by the gendarmerie, that that gentleman offered him safe and easy means of escape, but my father refused to avail himself of the opportunity.

He was incarcerated in Paris in the Bourbe prison, then called Port-Libre apparently in derision.

He perished on the 9th of Messidor, year II. (27th of June, 1794), one month to a day before the 9th of Thermidor.

My mother, destined to the same fate, having offered to do needlework for the prison, succeeded in taking,

on a piece of wax, the impression of the key of a passage opening out of the garret, which latter faced the road. An old servant, who had long been in the employ of the Rosen family, had a key made from that impression. Alone, secretly, and unknown to us, he took measures, waited at night at the prison door for my mother, and accompanied her to Switzerland, after crossing with her the gorges of Jura. The family of a postmaster, whose establishment was situated between Vesoul and Saint-Cergues, received her and concealed her for a few days. On this occasion, as on many others, an inhabitant of Saint-Cergues, named Trébout, whose business consisted, to a certain extent, in aiding emigration from France to Switzerland, lent his good offices. I have known that Trébout; he often boasted of his services; he was an honest fellow, although, under an appearance of coarse familiarity, he was not wanting in vanity.

In order the better to conceal her project of escape, my mother had expressed the wish that my sister and I should come to Vesoul. We arrived at the moment when she was being vainly hunted for, and I shall never in my life forget the consternation of the door-keeper, the stunned appearance of the warders, the awe of the prisoners, who trembled lest they should

suffer, and all the uproar it caused. The servants who had brought us, judging, not unreasonably, that it was time to go, hastened to take us away. From that day I have never set my foot within the prison at Vesoul ; but I never pass through that town, which I often do, without a thousand thoughts of it coming back to me.

I spent at Saint-Remy the period which elapsed between the escape of my mother and her return. Saint-Remy was sequestered ; the furniture was sold. I was present at the auction, seated by the side of the public auctioneer, and shouting with him, no doubt from sheer childish amusement ; for it did not occur to any of those present that there was anything in it to wonder at. Yet I was not more ignorant than a child of my age ; I had been brought up with my sisters, both older than I. I read, passionately, what few books came under my hands, especially the ‘ Voyage d’Anacharsis ’ and the ‘ Arabian Nights ; ’ and I used to realize, in imagination, in the gardens and park at Saint-Remy, the scenes which struck me most in those two works, so different from each other.

I was not entirely devoid of the power of reflection, either. I still see from here the spot near the bath-room where, I know not why, I was struck by the idea that *I*

was myself, and could not be any other but myself. The ideas of *identity*, *personality*, and *necessity*, suggested themselves to me under their rigorously metaphysical forms. I have never thought of them since without recollecting this first awakening of meditation.

Thanks to the tolerance of the local authorities, we remained in the Château of Saint-Remy all the time between my mother's escape and her return ; but the servants to whom we were entrusted, having no means to procure for us an honourable livelihood, resolved to bring us to Vesoul, and to recommend us to the charity of the representative of the people, then on a mission to that town. It was, I believe, Robespierre the younger. They dressed me according to the fashion, and put a red cap on my head and wooden clogs on my feet. We had to wait nearly an hour before being admitted to the presence of our future benefactor. He received us pretty well, and gave us, out of my mother's property, which was estreated, a provision of ten thousand francs in paper-money, to enable us to leave. I do not exactly know what was then the value of the paper.

The 9th of Thermidor threw open the prisons—alas ! too late for my father—and brought back the fugitives to their homes. My mother returned to France ; the

orders of sequestration concerning her Saint-Remy and Alsace estates were quashed, through the intervention of M. d'Argenson, who became a second father to us.

Soon afterwards I started with him for Paris, my mother and sister following us. I was in the Workshop of Revolution on the very day of the 13th of Vendémiaire. We lived in the Rue de la Chaise, facing the present Hôtel de Croix. This event of Vendémiaire 13 did not seem to me to have caused much sensation amidst the population of our district. There was among the *sections* of our neighbourhood neither unanimity nor enthusiasm, and the issue of the day inspired, indeed, neither much surprise nor much regret.

A few days afterwards, M. d'Argenson took me to Ormesson. It was a country residence situated a few leagues from Paris, and then inhabited by M. Mathieu de Montmorency. A numerous and brilliant company, as times went then, was assembled there. For the first time I saw Madame de Staël and her son, my junior by a few years. I tried vainly to recollect the names of the persons present : I only remember M. de Méry and M. de Lezay, afterwards Prefect of Strasbourg. The conversation was lively ; it naturally related to the events of the day, and I have not the slightest recollection of anyone being much grieved.

My mother arrived. We then occupied the whole house in the Rue de la Chaise; besides which, my mother hired a small country house at Boulogne. We spent the winter in Paris, and the following summer in our country house. I was entrusted to the care of a tutor. His name was Guillobé. He had brought up the MM. de Bondy and M. de Boulogne, son of the Fermier-Général of that name. He had travelled in England, Scotland, and Ireland with M. de Boulogne, and in the company of a gentleman much esteemed in his time, M. Baert, author of a book about England which still enjoys a certain reputation. M. Guillobé was an honest, cultured, sensible man. I owe him a great deal, and I preserve for his memory much affection and respect.

M. Guillobé, who was born at Loches, in Touraine, of a respectable and modest family, with whom I spent many agreeable hours, was acquainted with several deputies of the department of Indre et Loire to the Convention Nationale. I attended, with him, the last sittings of that assembly, when it was nearing the last moments of its miserable career, and was only engaged upon settling the consequences of its wretched inheritance.

In the course of the eighteen months which my mother spent either in Paris or in Boulogne, her house

was frequented by all that was left of the society she had known formerly, that is, three or four years before, and by a certain mixture of what has since been known as the society of the Directory. Madame de Staël and Madame de Valence, daughter of Madame de Genlis, belonged to the latter, and it was through them that society was admitted into our family circle.

To give some idea of the state of the manners of the time, it will suffice to say that among the men who occupied the most prominent position in the fashionable circles of the day was a Swede, Count de Ribbing, whose chief, or rather sole, merit consisted in having openly abetted the assassination of the King of Sweden. He was exiled for that very reason ; but in a country like France, where the Government was carried on exclusively by regicides, and where most respectable people, and the victims of the Terror themselves, lived on intimate terms with them, the assassin of the King of Sweden could very well, and without offending propriety, be received, welcomed, and treated with consideration.

This often occurred to me in 1848, when the best friends of General Cavaignac were vainly endeavouring, in his own interests, to induce him to brand as assassins the wretches who tried to shoot King Louis Philippe. M.

de Ribbing, after winning brilliant but transient successes on a stage which was, after all, quite worthy of him, contracted, if I have been well informed, not a very honourable union, and died in circumstances verging upon misery.

As may well be imagined, I was quite unused to the society which thus posed and passed before me. I was learning Greek and Latin as passably as they may be learned in private tuition, for heaven knows how rudimentary my knowledge was ! I witnessed the patriotic *fêtes* in the Champ de Mars and the rustic festivals in the suburbs of Paris ; like many others, I saw Madame Tallien coming up to the Ranelagh disguised as ‘ Diana,’ with her half-naked breast, wearing cothurns on her feet, and dressed, if I may use the term, in a tunic which scarcely covered her knees.

My tutor used often to take me with him to visit his relatives, his friends, and all the persons with whom he was acquainted. Thus I spent several weeks in the small town of Dourdan, in the house of Mesdemoiselles Talibon, two of his cousins. They were old maids, kind, devout, and passably amiable. In that peaceful and bourgeois society I used to hear a language very different from that I was accustomed to at my mother’s table. The events of the day were there discussed in

quiet another light. There I never heard anyone regret the old *régime* nor the monarchy; people there only wished for a little rest, which they did not despair of obtaining from the Directory; their shortsightedness was only equalled by their indifference, even with regard to the Babœuf Conspiracy; the scandals of the time did not much affect those people; the frequency and facility of divorces were the most constant and almost the only subject of complaint.

Having spent eighteen months between Paris and Boulogne, my mother took up her residence at Ormes. It was at that time a curious mansion, built by the father of M. d'Argenson during his exile, and it had been almost entirely pulled down by M. d'Argenson himself during the last year of his life. Many travellers will no doubt still recollect having seen, between Tours and Poitiers, five leagues from Châtellerault, that château on the centre of which stood a tower which could be ascended from the outside by means of a circular staircase. This residence had not been completed, but the habitable portion of it was comfortable, and that which was merely laid out was projected on a magnificent scale.

At Ormes, we met M. d'Argenson's sister, who was then unmarried, and who afterwards became the wife of M. de Murat. She was a cripple, but remark-

ably intelligent and witty, and extremely kind. My mother had long been acquainted with her, and during our stay at Saint-Remy the youngest of my sisters had been confided to her care. We also met there, though they lived apart from us, in an outhouse belonging to the château, two natural children of M. de Voyer; one was M. Bertenot, an abbé before the Revolution, the other Madame de Rullecourt, widow of a general officer killed in the attack upon the island of Jersey. M. de Voyer, their father, and father also to M. d'Argenson, had provided them with a small income, of which, about the time I speak of, they had scraped together what was left in order to finish their days together in their native place. M. Bertenot was amiable, well-bred, cheerful, and a very pleasant companion. His sister was not like him, but she had two sweet and kind daughters. They both married, and I believe that the youngest one, Madame Mahner, is still alive at the time of writing these lines.

During the three closing years of the last century, which we spent at Ormes in summer, and in Paris in winter, two events—one of public character, the other private—occurred, which left a special impression on my memory. The first was my journey to Broglie. Broglie had been taken from my grandfather as an

emigrant, and from my father on account of his execution. It was for the last reason restored to us, thanks to the courageous motion of M. de Pontécoulant, one of the men who, during the course of our civil troubles, honoured most the name of man and that of Frenchman. The estate was returned to us in its entirety, although, according to his marriage settlement, my father was entitled to it only to the value of eight hundred thousand francs. But the value of landed property had fallen so low in 1794 that the whole demesne was not valued beyond that sum. Afterwards, my grandfather's children were indemnified for the extra value of the estate.

I entered Broglie as lord of the manor in a rustic car driven in turn by my tutor and myself. The mansion being uninhabitable to such an extent that it did not even possess windows, and scarcely any shutters, I went to lodge in the house of M. Anzoux, the village attorney, who invited me to do so with as much kindness as readiness. All the people were, indeed, anxious to welcome me, and regarded it as an honour. They all wished to relate to me the revolutionary excesses which our home had witnessed: how the cannons ornamenting the terrace—those very cannons which my grandfather had himself captured from our enemies—were carried away in triumph to be made into pennies; how the

books, which, however, were neither rich nor scarce, were piled up, pitched pell-mell in trunks, and pompously transferred to the lumbery of the Town Hall of Bernay, where, if I am correctly informed, they may still be found in whatever state moths and mice may have left them ; how one fellow did this, and another that ; how, in short, the steward, M. Mérimée, was driven to flight from a window, leaving behind the papers and documents relative to the estate—a professional mishap, in times of revolution. I almost witnessed the recurrence of such a misfortune in 1848. Vanity of human things ! The name of Mérimée has since acquired a certain fame in arts, and become illustrious in literature ; but the inhabitants of Broglie, who still remember the grandfather and his discomfiture, have probably never heard speak of the son and of the grandson ; and that is no wonder, since, at the distance of only forty leagues * from Paris, they do not seem to be aware that their little village gave birth, in our days, to Fresnel, one of the glories of France and of science. After this, M. de Lamartine wonders that, meeting in a convent of Syria with an aged and half-crazy English lady, he should have been obliged to make his name known to her and to reveal his genius !

* About 120 English miles.

I only stayed a few days at Broglie. My stay there was rather an act of taking possession than a settlement. I was too young, and my tutor too unfamiliar with that kind of life, to induce us to remain. The management of the estate was at that time undertaken, though not officially, by M. Lemonnier, then Commissaire du Gouvernement to the authorities of the canton.* He was a most honest and intelligent man, who had helped to obtain for us the restitution of the entire estate, without any deduction for the benefit of the fiscal authorities.

M. Lemonnier, of whom I shall, perhaps, have occasion to speak a few words further on, had, it was said, belonged in his youth to I know not what order of the regular clergy; but that is a point which never was made very clear, and respecting which I have doubts.

The second event, the public event to which I referred above, was the 18 Fructidor, followed shortly afterwards by the *loi des ôtages* (law of hostages), the *emprunt forcé* (compulsory loan), and the motion for the expulsion of all the 'ci-devant nobles' from the French territory.

At Ormes, we witnessed the passage of the *députés fructidorisés*,† removed like criminals, in closed car-

* A French administrative subdivision of the arrondissement, itself a subdivision of the department.

† Those who fell victims of the *coup d'état* of Fructidor.

riages railed up like cages, to the seaport at which they were to embark. They halted, or rather the police agent to whose care they were entrusted, and whose instructions concerning them were the subject of suspicion, caused them to halt in front of the avenue leading to the château, and the frugal meal prepared for them was fetched from the inn. They were not allowed to alight.

My mother, my sisters, and I, we brought them fruit and refreshments, which we were not forbidden to give them. It was a painful spectacle; the indignation was great, but the consternation was greater still. Everybody foresaw the renewal of the Reign of Terror, and resignedly prepared for it.

We were on good terms with the family of M. de Menou, brother of General Menou, famous for the vivacity of his opinions in the *Assemblée Constituante*, as also by the part which he played in the war of Vendée, and on the 13 Vendémiaire, and again during the expedition to Egypt. That kind and amiable family, whose eldest son married one of my sisters sometime afterwards, was, like our own, preparing for exile. Between the Château of Boussay, where they lived, and Ormes, the interchange of communications was constant; nobody dared hope to escape proscrip-

tion, nobody knew exactly where to seek a refuge, or how to realize the remains of a fortune barely recovered.

None were more afraid than the members of the clergy, and their apprehension was fully justified. I had just completed my religious education and my first communion. My religious instruction had been entrusted to the care of a parish priest of the neighbourhood, public worship not being yet re-established in Ormes. The priest was a worthy ecclesiastic, who, however, not being possessed beyond the virtues of his avocation of any special ardour for martyrdom, was somewhat perplexed at hearing again the threats and blasphemies which, two or three years before, had fallen on his ears, and in foreseeing the renewal of the dangers which he had lived through without flinching. The ceremony of my first communion, nevertheless, was solemnized with a certain pomp : we were about a score of children, accompanied by our families ; the authorities did not interfere, and the patriots of the place contented themselves with smiling without uttering any injurious expression.

Those who did not live in the times I speak of cannot form any idea of the state of profound distress into which France had fallen during the interval that

lasted from the 18 Fructidor to the 18 Brumaire. In plunging anew into the *régime* of the Terror, she did so without consolation or hope. The glory of her arms was tarnished, her conquests lost, her territory threatened. The *régime* of the Terror no longer appeared to her in the light of a dreadful crisis, of an awful paroxysm leading necessarily and shortly to a salutary reaction, and, for that very reason, to a better order of things. The reaction had failed ; the Government which it had founded was sending its founders to die at Sinnamari. All the efforts made by respectable people to secure the legal enjoyment of their rights had been crushed by violence. The only prospect was a relapse into bloody anarchy, the end of which, or the remedy for which, it was not possible to foresee.

The 18 Brumaire was the remedy, but the 18 Brumaire was not sufficient. What had been wanted for ten years was not *coups d'état*, but genius, wisdom, energy, all that which makes them excusable, causes them to benefit society, and renders them purposeless in the future.

Both in its results as in the intentions of its author, the 18 Brumaire was precisely the reverse of the 18 Fructidor. That is its glory. It created that which

the 18 Fructidor destroyed. It established the state of things which still subsists, notwithstanding the many changes which have happened in France for more than half a century, and for which it is not responsible.

The 18 Brumaire was salvation, and the four years following it were a series of triumphs abroad over the enemies, and at home over the principles of disorder and anarchy. Those four years are, with the ten years of the reign of Henri IV., the best and brightest period of French history.

III.

1800—1804.

WE spent those four years in turn in Paris and at Ormes.

I was in Paris on the 3rd of Nivôse, at the time of the explosion of the infernal machine. I heard it from the house where we then resided: it was the pavilion in the Rue Saint-Dominique, in which Madame de Genlis brought up the Princes of the House of Orleans. That abominable attempt did not excite so much horror and awe as might have been expected, so great was then the carelessness and indifference of the public mind, now incapable of emotions, depraved by the Revolution.

I must, however, humbly confess that the iniquitous reprisals, unscrupulously carried out by the Consular Government, the arbitrary imprisonments, the suppression of newspapers, the indiscriminate transportations—now the Jacobins paying for the Chouans,* and now

* The Royalist insurgents of Vendée.

the latter for the Jacobins—did not, either, excite a very strong indignation among the respectable class of people. Society, which was being rapidly re-organized by a powerful and, all things considered, a healing hand, was not so particular. Exiles of various periods and opinions returned home in crowds, recovered part of their property, petitioned for the rest, and did not set themselves against the authorities who allowed them to expect such restitution. Those among Revolutionists who were really converted, or who proclaimed themselves to be—who put aside their red caps until such time as they could cut red ribbons and red heels out of them (as they were ingeniously represented to be doing in an English caricature of the time)—were indifferent whether they rendered themselves guilty of fresh acts of violence. The friends of liberty—of true liberty—the heirs of 1789, innocent of all the crimes committed by the *Assemblée Législative* and by the Convention, had unfortunately allowed their ranks to be split up on the 18 Fructidor. Among them some, moved by a feeling of resentment which was indeed legitimate, though perhaps imprudent, against the terrorists and the regicides, had more or less closely allied themselves to the partisans of counter-revolution, of whom Pichegru was the head; others, owing perhaps to a justifiable

apprehension of the consequences of such alliance, had not openly separated themselves from the Directory, even after the detestable *coup d'état* which for a time deprived it of power. Through mutual mistrust they were more inclined to reproach one another with the faults of the past than to unite against the excesses of the present. Siméon, in the Tribunate, would in no case have lent his help to Benjamin Constant. Their divisions left a free field of action to genius, wisdom, glory, and fortune. The Code Civil and the Concordat, the peace of Lunéville and that of Amiens, met all requirements and satisfied everybody.

I was then very young : brought up in the principles of my father and of my step-father, I much inclined to those who dreaded more the progress of dictatorship than they appreciated its advantages. What most shocked me was the appearance of a revival of the old *régime*, and the institution of the Legion of Honour especially inspired me with an aversion, hardly reasonable, I admit, but which I never could thoroughly conquer. To make up for it, I took a lively interest in the successes of our arms. Our reverses during the campaign of the year VII. had caused me deep concern—it was my first patriotic pre-occupation ; the victories of Hohenlinden and of Marengo filled me with enthusiasm.

I took besides a livelier, if possible, though reserved and silent, interest in the literary quarrels which were then commencing, the activity of which was somewhat sharpened by politics. 'Delphine' and 'Atala' were published almost simultaneously; and these two brilliant works, conceived under almost opposite inspirations, were the subject of interminable conversation in the salons of my mother. Madame de Staël ✓ was the ruling spirit of those salons. I do not recollect having seen M. de Chateaubriand at my mother's; but there were several of the prominent members of the coterie of which he was already the leader, or rather the idol. Madame de Beaumont, among others, used to visit my mother pretty frequently.

I know not whether it was during the summer preceding, or in that following the 3 Nivôse, that I made a journey to Vendée and to Brittany in the company of my preceptor.

He had relations in a small town situated in the heart of Vendée, on the coast, beyond Machecoul, and called Isle-de-Bonin. We went there from Ormes, through Angers, Saumur, and Nantes. It was shortly after the quelling of the second outbreak, that which followed the appointment of the First Consul, and which was the work of Generals Hédouville and Brune. The country



I speak of had taken no part in the recent rising ; yet it still bore evident and numerous traces of the ravages it had been subjected to a few years before. The villages were still half-destroyed, the woods in ashes, the fields untilled. The peaceful family in whose home we were received, the neighbours who frequented it, the inhabitants of the place and of the surrounding districts, related to us the scenes of horror they had witnessed, just as the bourgeois of Paris did, when speaking of the slaughters of the 2nd September, in a simple, familiar style, and merely for want of any other topic. They interrupted their narration to perform their domestic occupations ; the gossiping so dear to the inhabitants of all small towns was freely indulged in. Strange nation, to which may be applied the words which the author of ' *Les Martyrs* ' * said of the genius of Greece : ' *Qu'elle ne peut faire, de la mort et des malheurs mêmes, une chose sérieuse* ' (that it cannot regard death and misfortune themselves as serious matters).

From Bonin we returned to Nantes, and from Nantes we reached Brest by way of Lorient and Quimper. Those desolated countries presented everywhere the same sight. Brest, on the contrary, was brilliant and lively. Never, perhaps, had the harbour contained

* Chateaubriand.

—and never, perhaps, will it again hold—such a large fleet of line-of-battle ships, frigates, and vessels of all kinds and dimensions. Nearly all the French navy, under the orders of Admiral Latouche-Tréville, nearly all the Spanish navy, under the command of Admiral Gravina, were flying their flags in that harbour: more than sixty line-of-battle ships were collected there.

M. de Latouche-Tréville had been my father's friend; he was in command of the frigate *La Gloire*, on board of which he went to America, and fought, during the voyage, against an English line-of-battle ship, a fight worthy of his name. He gave me a most friendly welcome, and afforded me the means and the opportunity of seeing everything. On the fête-day of the King of Spain, I dined on board the Spanish Admiral's ship *La Concepcion*, with the general staff of the two fleets, amidst the booming of the guns which, from time to time, were fired from all the ships in the harbour, and from all the batteries in the town. It was an imposing and magnificent spectacle, which will perhaps never again be excelled in grandeur. It needed a most singular concurrence of circumstances to bring together on one single spot of our coasts that immense gathering of naval forces.

After eight or ten days spent in a highly instructive and entertaining fashion at Brest, we returned to Ormes *viâ* Saint-Malo, Rennes, and Laval.

We passed but a short time at Ormes, which we left for Paris, where my tutor made me attend the lectures of the Ecole Centrale des Quatre-Nations. I attended the classical lectures (higher class) by the Abbé Guérault; those on *belles-lettres* by M. Dumas, afterwards *proviseur** of the Collège Charlemagne; those on mathematics by M. Lacroix; those on natural philosophy by old M. Brisson; and those on natural history by M. Brongniart. The last-named was the son of an architect of some reputation, and an intimate friend of my tutor.

I used to attend at the same time the lectures of the Ecole des Mines: those on chemistry by M. Vauquelin, those on geology by M. Faujas de Saint-Fonds, and those on mineralogy by the Abbé Haüy. As may be seen, I was not idle. The three years I thus spent, only leaving Paris during the holidays, are among the best recollections of my life.

The Ecoles Centrales were then entirely free from any restriction. Each professor taught after the method he liked best, and was not subjected to any control with

* Principal.

regard to the choice of his subject, provided he did not wander too far from the special subject assigned to his 'chair.' Admittance to these lectures was quite free ; each professor was entrusted with the police of his hall during the lecture, though he possessed over the students no authority whatever. Once the lecture over, the hall-keeper (porter) used to sweep the room, and that was all. Classical studies, divided into two classes, were not of a very high standard, and mathematical and physical studies were poor ; M. Dumas's literary lectures were brilliant and full of animation ; and M. Brongniart's lectures upon natural history were most instructive and largely attended. I have preserved the papers he used to read, and, although science has since much progressed and I have myself much forgotten, I still sometimes peruse them with pleasure. Similar freedom used also to obtain at the Ecoles des Mines, admission to which used to be free ; whereas it ought, strictly speaking, to have been limited to students having gone through the course of study at the Ecole Polytechnique.

The professors at the Ecoles des Mines were not only men of the highest merit, but also of uncommon kindness and inexhaustible benevolence. Foremost among them was M. Haüy, one of the most amiable savants

I ever met with during my long career. His voice, though clear and flexible, was weak, but his method of tuition was marvellously lucid. He readily allowed himself to be interrupted, not only by the students but also by the public who attended his lectures. Often after the lecture, having failed to grasp fully the co-ordination and the connection of M. Haüy's ideas, have I requested him to explain to me one or two obscure points, when he would at once begin afresh the whole lesson to oblige me. He often invited me to come to see him, before the lecture, in his humble study, the furniture of which comprised only a few straw-bottomed chairs and a deal desk, surmounted by a crucifix, close to which was a small oratory, where the worthy priest used to say mass every morning. He used to give me his notes to transcribe, and, for a long time, I preserved the copies I made.

IV.

1804—1809.

IN this way the latter years of my education were passed; my elder sisters married, and in the two houses of which they became members I saw society for the first time no longer as a child, but as a young man. The tutor of my brother, René d'Argenson, was the son of a man who was well-known in the world of letters and philology, M. Schweighäuser, of Strasbourg, the editor of Herodotus and of Athenæus. In his company I visited several houses where the most celebrated men of letters of that period used to meet, and more frequently than any other the house of M. Suard. There I met what remained of society of the eighteenth century—the Abbé Morellet, Garat, Daunou, Ginguiné, and several others whose names I have forgotten; M. Villers, who had just arrived from Germany, and was introducing the philosophy of Kant, to the horror of all who heard him; M. Vanderbourg,

another French émigré, tinged with German ideas, and who was then preparing, with all the ardour and the sincerity of his unsophisticated enthusiasm, to bring before the public the poems of Clotilde de Surville.

It was the period when the crusade against the philosophy of the eighteenth century was beginning in all its vigour, when M. de Chateaubriand and M. de Fontanes, M. Joubert, and all the small coterie whom I have already mentioned, opened the era of nineteenth-century literature under the flag of the Concordat.

The strangest thing in this respect was the salon of M. and Madame Suard. Opposite influences were working there silently. In it there existed at the same time a certain spirit of counter-revolution, and the last echo of that philosophical spirit of which the Revolution had in some respects been nothing but the sad outcome and the fatal consequence.

M. Suard was an amiable man, with a refined and delicate mind. His views were liberal and moderate. Nor was he inaccessible to the new ideas which the reaction was diffusing, but his chief object was to draw together again in his house one of those brilliant salons in which his youth had been formed, and where an unreserved liberty of views and of speech was never dissociated from elegant and polite manners. Madame

Suard helped him to the best of her abilities, but was rather a hindrance than otherwise, for she was pedantic and stiff, and most of the company who met at her house of an evening appeared to be more irritated by *le Génie du Christianisme* and the modern school than did the master of the house.

The newspaper called *Le Publiciste* was their organ. It was, so to speak, a moderate and clever medium to soften the asperity of *La Décade*, the organ which stood up for the eighteenth century, and the warmth of *Le Journal des Débats*, the organ of reaction.

✓ M. Suard was chief editor of *Le Publiciste* ; Mademoi-
selle de Meulan, who afterwards became Madame Guizot,
was one of the wittiest contributors ; M. de Barante,
✓ then quite a young man, although already *auditeur* to
the *Conseil d'Etat*, commenced his reputation in the
columns of that newspaper. He did not, however, long
contribute to it. The excellent work which, about
that time, he wrote on the literature of the eighteenth
century, a work which was sent to the public competi-
tion proposed by the Institut, and which aroused the
wrath of that learned body, had rendered M. de Barante
too compromising a contributor for *Le Publiciste*.

About the same time, I also used to frequent another
society of wits, which used to meet at M. Legouvé's ;

it was chiefly composed of poets and dramatic authors. MM. Say, Jouy, Arnaud, etc., were the leading spirits of the party; there they used to carp at critics and journalists. M. Legouvé, who was then closing his career, was of an amiable, wise, and meek frame of mind. The celebrated surgeon Sue was, if I remember rightly, the first husband of Madame Legouvé; M. Eugène Sue was her son. ✓

About the same time I entered society in the full sense of the word. Although my mother now used to spend the whole year at Ormes, where, after my sisters' marriage, she devoted herself exclusively to the education of her family, she was not forgotten by her friends and by those with whom she had been formerly acquainted. The recollection of her, and the name which I bore, easily opened to me the houses where the remnant of the old *régime* used to meet and give tone, first to consular, and, soon after, to imperial society. Foremost amongst such houses was the Hôtel de Luynes, where Madame de Chevreuse, who was later destined to pay with exile, and, perhaps, with her own life, the independence of her language and of her conduct towards the Master of Europe, used to reign as the queen of fashion. I was introduced to M. de Talleyrand, who received me with kindness. M. and

Madame de Jaucourt, the intimate friends of my mother, took me to Madame de Laval's, at whose very small house in the Rue Roquépine all the old society, whose lead was shared by M. de Talleyrand and M. de Narbonne, used to meet. There it was that I became acquainted with the latter, already the friend of my parents, and whose friendship was, for too short a time, the honour and charm of my life.

During the year 1806 I spent the summer in Belgium, in the Château de Francvarey, near Namur, at the house of M. de Croix, who had married Mademoiselle de Vassé, one of my cousins. I also went with M. de Croix's family on a journey to Holland, where that gentleman possessed large estates. Thus I had the opportunity of studying that peculiar country a little. At Antwerp, I made the acquaintance of M. Malouet; a gentleman who, during our first Revolution, enjoyed a most honourable reputation; he was now *préfet maritime*,* having at last embraced the imperial cause after a long emigration. Very old though he now was, he still preserved the fire of his youth and the pristine vigour of his opinions, which, in 1806, were as liberal as they were wise in 1789.

* An exalted naval appointment, generally given in France as a sinecure to admirals on the retired list. There are only five *préfectures maritimes* : Cherbourg, Brest, Rochefort, Lorient, and Toulon.

Nothing was gloomier than the spectacle offered by Holland at the time of my visit: its seaports were deserted; only the hulls of a few dismantled ships were to be seen at Amsterdam or at Rotterdam. The warehouses were closed and the shops empty; grass grew in the streets. At ordinary times, the town of the Hague offered alone a rather more animated appearance. King Louis, his court, his Government, the semblance of a diplomatic corps, lent some life to the place; but, at the time of my visit, the King was absent, the diplomatic corps was away, and the Government were on a holiday. All we saw there were the few families of some opulent merchants, who, in spite of the universal ruin, had preserved their wealth by keeping up a secret intercourse with England, which alone the Imperial Government could regard as a crime. Being a foreigner and a novice, I could not, owing to the shortness of my stay and to the peculiarity of the circumstances, have with the leading members of the upper middle class those intimate relations which enable us to discover the innermost recesses of men's hearts. Nevertheless, I could not help being struck by all the gravity and the solidity, the moderation, and, at the same time, the indomitable resolution, the patience and the foresight, which were noticeable in

the conversations which used to take place at the interminable dinners at which I was a guest. It almost seemed as though I saw those admirable burgo-masters, with whose portraits Rembrandt and Vandyke peopled the halls of the Amsterdam Penitentiary, leaving their frames, and I heard them talk. Great and strange nation! so different from the German nation, of which it was originally but a mere fraction, just as its language was but a dialect of the German. So different from the English nation, to which it is related by so many years of alliance, so many commercial habits, and such unbroken intercourse. So different again from the French, and even from the Belgian, its companion in the bitterest and most painful moments of its existence; serious, sensible, thrifty, and persevering nation, which gave for civil and religious liberty the fullest ransom that man can pay—eight years of ruin, struggles, scaffolds, and of *auto-da-fé*—and which, knowing how to preserve its simple tastes and ways, its quiet and insuperable energy, under the French domination, knowing how to make use of those virtues under the Monarchy as well as under the Republic, and to pass, as time went, with a sort of magnanimous indifference, from under the yoke of the one to that of the other, never, or at

least, hardly ever promised liberty by turbulence, or order by servitude !

During my stay at Amsterdam I visited Saardam, Nord-Holland, and the peculiar village of Broeck, where they say that the produce of the old Dutch commerce was deposited, or rather buried—diamonds, laces, precious woods, and various other articles of material wealth. After so many years, I do not know what has now become of that village, but in 1806 it certainly offered a most extraordinary sight. The streets were marked by means of boxwood hedges, high enough to lean upon, and representing human or other figures : now some whist-players, now again a concert of musicians with their instruments. The street leading to the central square was in the shape of the neck of a violin. The streets were covered with fine sand of various colours, methodically laid down in regular devices, which were left undisturbed owing to the fact that nobody ever crossed those artificial streets. The houses of the village, surrounded by small gardens, communicated by means of pathways ; the back of each house invariably led in to the street : in it was fixed a door, which was opened to each inhabitant only on three eventful occasions—birth, marriage, and death. Inside those houses were contained the marvels

which were so much talked about. Nearly all those houses belonged to the members of the Amsterdam Insurance Company ; no one was admitted there unless one of the proprietor's family. I have been told that Queen Hortense, having insisted on entering one of those houses at least once, could not overcome the resistance which was offered to her, and very wisely consented to desist.

From Amsterdam we went to Utrecht, the university buildings of which were closed at that time of the year. From Utrecht we went to Soreusse, where M. de Croix's chief estates were situated. We stayed there some time, and there it was that, ignorant though I was and am still of agriculture, I, with great pleasure and some profit, heard the land-steward and the neighbours discussing at length the rural economy of the country. I regret having lost my diary of that journey. I kept this diary a long time, and it contained most curious observations on the subject. After half a century, and even more, I would not dare trust my memory to supply the missing information. Yet who, like myself, has not been struck by the sight of those vast extents of country, so symmetrically divided, of fields and meadows hemmed in, as it were, by dykes, of crops carried away in carts drawn at full

gallop over the dykes, of enormous horses rushing along with formidable noise, and causing the moving ground of the roads, raised by the hand of man, to shake under their feet, and then the animals eating, out of mangers, bread and beer, just like their drivers?

There is nothing so much unlike any other landscape as a Dutch landscape. If one passed with eyes bandaged from France into Germany, Italy, Spain, or even into England, one might, on the bandage being taken off, experience some difficulty in saying whether one had gone from one country into the other; but in Holland, one feels quite in a strange place as soon as one sets one's foot there: by going there one has not only changed places, but regions.

On my return to Belgium I was shortly called back to Paris on a business about which negotiations had already been opened, although they had, until then, been carried on with very little vigour.

I was then scarcely twenty-one years old. Having been exempted from military service on account of my short sight, I was anxious to enter the civil service, then the most important career after the army. A request with that object had been presented to the Empress by my uncle, then Bishop of Acqui and ✓

Imperial Chaplain. The readiness with which my uncle accepted that post, without incurring the blame of his family, shows sufficiently the spirit by which society in France was then animated. It was scarcely four years after the assassination of the Duke d'Enghien, and my uncle, with the rest of his family, had only just returned from exile.

At the time of which I am now speaking, that is, in 1806, my uncle renewed his solicitations; I made several visits with him, and was introduced to M. de Bassano and to the Arch-Chancellor. I received the promise of having my name entered as *auditeur* on the very next list of appointments; but the execution of that promise was delayed more than two years, which period I spent alternately in utilizing and wasting my time. Sometimes I passed the summer at Ormes, at my sisters', but chiefly at Boussay, at Madame de Menou's; the winter I spent in Paris. I used to go into society, although I did not much care for it, and I read a great deal more than I studied. Like the poet Bernard, I might have said: 'I was twenty, and I had written a tragedy.' I had written two, which, thank God! I soon threw into the fire.

About that time I became acquainted with two most distinguished men, one of whom, much my senior,

entertained the sincerest affection for me until his death; the other, a little my junior, became my friend, and remained so through all the vicissitudes of my public career.

M. Desrenaudes, formerly chief vicar to M. de Talleyrand, when the latter was Bishop of Autun, the very same who served Mass at the *fête* of the Federation, and who since was, with Vicq d'Azyr, the chief author of the great Report on Public Instruction presented to the Assemblée Constituante—M. Desrenaudes was faithfully attached to M. de Narbonne, and he showed me the liveliest friendship. He occupied in the university an eminent and most deserved position, and he introduced me to several members of that body.

It was at his house that I met for the first time M. Villemain, who but a short while before was still a student, but had already been crowned by the Institut for his charming eulogy of Montaigne. I was present at his introduction to M. de Narbonne at the latter's house, and the interview between the two constituted such an exchange of witticism, repartee, and point as would have dazzled even Madame de Staël. M. Villemain has related the early incidents of his life and of our acquaintance with his usual grace and vivacity. What he did not say is that he was, even

at that period, what he never ceased to be—one of the most delicate, subtle, and refined of men; one of the noblest and most upright characters produced in our days by our country.

About the same time, and whilst I was staying in the country, that plot which in the official language of the historians of the Empire goes by the harmless name of ‘Transaction de Bayonne’ was planned and carried out.

We were at Ormes, on the very line of route by which news must travel; nothing that was passing either way could escape our notice. I had a glimpse of the Emperor as he went by on his road to Bayonne. He stopped for breakfast, like any ordinary traveller, at the inn of the place. He was no longer that young First Consul, slim, unconcerned, with his slightly olive complexion and his stern scowl, whom I had met for the first time briskly striding through the Tuileries, giving his right arm to Bourrienne, and holding a small Turkish sabre under his left. Even outwardly everything was altered. He had grown very burly in waist and shoulders, his little legs were thick and fleshy, his complexion sallow, his forehead quite bald, and his features strongly put one in mind of a Roman Emperor as we see them on their coins. I will not say, like the

servant at the inn, that in all he did he seemed to have the crown on his head and the sceptre in his hand—I myself saw nothing of the kind; but, standing there like other lookers-on, crowding round to watch him go in and out, it struck me that everything in him had the air of an Emperor, but of an Emperor of the worst period.

A few days later I saw the Empress pass in great state, and fit to be painted as far as regards that part of her that was not seen, and painted as regards that which was. The splendid array of ladies-in-waiting, bedchamber - women, and maids-of-honour followed behind her, and the rear was brought up by the lady-readers who composed the harem of her sultan, and enabled him to put up still for some little time longer with the enamelled charms of the chief sultana. It, appears, however, that between the imperial couple it was not an unconditional bargain; for, a few days afterwards, we saw one of those odalisques return all in tears, and the loafers learned from the valet who accompanied her that she had been expelled for having given herself too great airs.

Nobody at this moment could clearly understand what was going on in Spain; everyone was more or less ignorant of what was brewing at Bayonne; and,

for the honour of humanity, I am inclined to think that the Emperor himself went there almost in the dark as to what he was going to do. He certainly had laid the trap, but most likely he did not foresee altogether what excessive use of power, baseness, and perfidy he would require to carry out his scheme.

One of the saddest fruits which all this bore we soon saw with our own eyes.

M. d'Argenson was informed one morning by an imperial courier that the next day the King of Spain, the Queen, and the Prince de la Paix would spend the day at Ormes. They were packed off—for this is the proper word for it—in the custody (alas ! this is also the proper word) of General Reille, who was one of the most brilliant and one of the most justly respected aides-de-camp of the Emperor. Ormes was one of their halting-places. Very luckily, their household and their kitchen staff preceded them, for ours would have been at their wits' end to have waited upon and to have served them as they were accustomed to be served.

They left Poitiers very early, and arrived at noon, in the very carriages, I fancy, in which Philip V. went to Spain ; at least, I have never seen any carriages like them except in contemporaneous pictures of the reign of Louis XIV. They were enormous gilt boxes,

with glass in front, behind, and at the sides, so that anybody riding in them was obliged to sit upright without being able to rest in any direction. These boxes were hung on springs of white leather in a frame of four huge gilt beams, to which it must have been very difficult to harness post-horses. Eight servants, clad in the Bourbon livery, came from Bayonne, standing up behind the boxes, just as if they had been taking a drive round the Prado in a state coach. All this parade, which was half sumptuous, half grotesque, which was suggestive of want of foresight and of precipitation—this strange mixture of antiquity without any prestige, of display without elegance—this exhibition of gilded misery, brought tears to the eyes and a smile to the lips. This was indeed Spain itself; it was the Bourbon branch of Spain itself; it was the royal couple itself!

We respectfully received the royal couple at the door of their royal chariot. The King was the first to get out. He was tall, thin, and bald, but vigorous and in flourishing health as far as his physical faculties were concerned; in fact, I should almost doubt whether he ever had any others, or whether it would not be doing him too much honour to lay the state of tearful distraction in which he was during the whole day to the

charge of old age. The Queen was next to get out. She was a small, elderly lady, or, perhaps, rather, a little fairy, neat—as neat as two pins—stately, demure, and reserved. Then came the Prince de la Paix—just the same as we had seen him for so many years in Paris, a sort of cross-breed between a *maitre d'hôtel* and a butler. Then, last of all, his daughter, the little Duchess of La Alcudia, of the blood royal, whom, poor child, the Queen kept beside her and under her eye.

The King did not stop an instant in the apartments which had been prepared for him, but went striding through the *château* and gardens, calling out, ‘Godoy, Godoy!’ loud enough to split one’s ears, for he evidently could not bear to lose sight of his favourite for a moment. Finally, he settled down with him in the billiard-room, and did not come out again till bedtime, except for his meals. He talked incessantly on different subjects with noisy vehemence and inexhaustible volubility, but without making the slightest allusion to the circumstances of the hour. He had quite the air of King Lear, though it was only a false air.

The Queen, on the other hand, took possession of her apartments and did not leave them again, although the King asked her to do so several times. She re-

ceived my mother with grave dignity and courtesy. She asked her many regal questions : ‘ How many children have you ? ’ ‘ How many of them are boys ? ’ ‘ How old are they ? ’ ‘ How long has this château been built ? ’ etc. ; and dismissed her without having mentioned her own personal position. The Emperor was not named during the whole conversation.

At eight o’clock they were all in bed ; at six o’clock the next morning they had all gone, and the royal equipage dragged with it the fortunes of the empire.

As a matter of fact, six months later the disaster of Baylen took place, and a year later all the great army passed before us, in mail-coaches, hurriedly and with great uproar, glittering with gold and steel, filled with joy and hope. I can still see the brilliant Auguste de Colbert and his staff coming into my room one morning, and pulling my legs, railing at my laziness. What impulse, what decision, what confidence in success and scorn towards the enemy they used to display ! Of all this gay, animated, noisy swarm, only one, alas ! if I remember rightly—Adrien d’Astorg—recrossed the Pyrenees ; nearly the whole of that great army left their bones rotting on the Spanish battlefields.

General Auguste de Colbert was killed in Galicia. He was the eldest of four brothers, who all raised

themselves by their sword to the highest rank in the army. Yet at the beginning of their career they had been so badly off that they had only one mufti between the four of them, which they wore turn and turn about. Surely a glorious name was never borne more gloriously !

BOOK II.

1809—1813.

I.

1809.

TOWARDS the beginning of 1809, I was at last appointed *auditeur* to the Conseil d'État. I had requested to be attached to the department of the Home Office, but I do not know why I was sent to the War Office.

This department at that time consisted of M. de Cessac as President; M. Daru and General Gassendi. Four *auditeurs* were placed under them: M. Pelet, of Lozère, M. Canouville, M. Tremont, and I. M. Pelet, of Lozère, was curator of the Crown Forests; M. de Canouville, *maréchal des logis* to the imperial household. There was very little to do at that time in the War Office department. I can find nothing, on sorting my papers—which I always carefully preserved from the moment I entered public life—except a few

abridged reports relating to prisons or to articles of clothing.

This small amount of work was allotted to us by M. de Cessac. He was, to say the least of it, a cold, dry man, pre-occupied solely by the affairs of the conscription, with which he was charged, and which certainly were not likely to make him tender-hearted. He wrote tolerably, although he was not a member of the French Academy, but he was a good man at heart, and more indulgent towards us young men than he really seemed to be.

We sent in our reports to the whole commission. M. Daru was a kind, amiable, open-hearted man, who took an interest in everything; M. Gassendi was old, rather gruff: he lived by himself, and never spoke a word. We took very little interest, or at any rate I did, in the work, which, as I have said, was very trifling, that we had to share amongst us; but I was greatly interested in the sittings of the Conseil d'État itself.

It then sat, if I remember rightly, three times a week, in the gallery of the Tuileries which separates the grand staircase from the wing which has since been known by the name of the Pavillon Marsan. At the end of this gallery, opposite the staircase, on a

platform raised to the height of two steps above the ground, there were three desks: that of the Master in the centre; on the right that of the High Chancellor, and on the left, that of the High Treasurer. All along the windows, which looked on one side on to the Carrousel, on the other on to the chapel, there were ranged small tables for the Councillors of State, beginning with the Presidents of sections; at the end, and opposite to the desk of the Emperor, there were other small tables for the *Maîtres des Requêtes*. Lastly, behind the tables of the Councillors of State, in the recesses of the windows, were placed other little tables for us humble *auditeurs*.

The Emperor, as a rule, presided at two out of the three weekly sittings. He arrived, as a rule, about an hour after the opening of the sitting—that is to say about half-past four o'clock—interrupted the debate, and after the order of the day had been placed upon his desk, introduced whatever subject he wished to have debated.

He listened patiently and attentively. He was fond of putting questions, and did so frequently, especially to Regnault de Saint Jean d'Angely, Defermon and Treilhard, but above all to the High Chancellor. When the debate had continued for some time he would speak. He was a lengthy speaker, without much

sequence of thought, and very incorrect, making use of the same phrases over and over again ; and, I must say it with all humility, in his disconnected and often trivial speeches, I never remarked those eminent qualities which he evinced in the Memoirs which he dictated to Generals Bertrand and Montholon.

These Memoirs remain quite a puzzle to me. If there was a writer endowed with the talent displayed in them, with that lucid co-ordination of ideas, that clearness and unaffected simplicity of language, with that proud and natural tone of authority, with that precision—in short, with that correct style which proceeds from the very habit of handling the pen—let that writer give up his name and reveal himself.

But if, as there seems no room to doubt, Napoleon is the real author of those Memoirs which bear his name, if, then, his Memoirs, I think, prove that he was thus, one of the greatest masters of our language, his talents as a speaker, as is indeed the case with many others, were far from equalling his talents as a writer. But at the time of which I am speaking I must allow that, having reached the height of his power, being, as he was, the object of adulation, and even of idolatry, he was very far from bestowing that vigilant and powerful activity on the management of public affairs which had

marked the first part of his reign. The records of the debates on the Code Civil do him more honour than the sittings at which I was present, and the abject servility of the admiration which his slightest words used to arouse perhaps makes me unjust towards him.

Two chief subjects took up the attention of the Conseil d'État from the time I entered that body—the only one in which at that time any activity prevailed—up to the departure of the Emperor for the campaign of 1809. These were the penal code and the mining laws. Treilhard was *rapporteur* of the penal code. The Emperor took very little part in the debate, which seemed to have but little interest for him; the mining laws exacted more of his attention. They contained a difficult and delicate question of ownership, which M. Fourcroy, *rapporteur* of the Bill, tried in vain to solve, and a solution of which the other members of the Council tried in vain to suggest. The question was whether a mine belonged in full right to the owner of the ground—that is to say, whether the right of ownership was indeterminable and could hold good even to the centre of the earth. The debate wisely ended in a compromise, the members deciding that, strictly speaking, the right of ownership could never be defended beyond the cultivable depth of the soil; that

the newly discovered mine constituted quite a *new property* ; that, in that case, the State had alone the right to concede it, provided it always admitted the claim of the proprietor of the surface to obtaining the privilege of the concession of the said mine. The term '*new property*,' hit upon by the Emperor at the close of the debate, terminated it amidst the loud expressions of applause of the whole Council; that term was, however, but the expression of an idea which had already been in the minds of the members for several previous sittings; but that expression was forcible and striking—nothing more was needed to kindle enthusiasm.

That first stage of my stay in the Conseil d'État was marked by a memorable sitting. The rapid development acquired of late by the institution of the Petits Séminaires had occasioned the Emperor some anxiety. He had commanded the attendance of the Conseil de l'Université before the Conseil d'État, and there were unmistakable signs of a storm. As usual, the Emperor entered the Council Chamber about half-past four. Observing that M. de Fontanes and the Conseillers de l'Université had been granted equal precedence with the Conseillers d'État, he seemed very much vexed, and treated M. de Ségur, himself a

Conseiller d'État and Grand Master of the Ceremonies, with great brutality. He caused the *Maîtres des Requêtes* to vacate the seats which they occupied at the lower end of the Council Chamber, facing his own desk. The *Conseillers de l'Université* took the places of the *Maîtres des Requêtes*, and the latter had to sit with the *auditeurs*. Then the sitting opened.

In a tone which forbode strong dissatisfaction, the Emperor addressed a few questions to M. de Fontanes. He, however, seemed to listen attentively to the replies, but soon after he burst forth. He spoke uninterruptedly for nearly three hours on the claims and encroachments of the clergy; he expressed himself against them in most abusive terms. Although by no means a devout body of men, the Council felt rather shocked than convinced by the imperial arguments. The Emperor kept repeating *ad nauseam* the following sentence: 'You are living under the reign of Charlemagne and not under that of Louis le Débonnaire;' then towards the close of his poor speech, turning towards the *auditeurs*, he apostrophised them in these very words: 'You will see, you will see, young men, what will happen to you, when you have an Emperor who goes to confession.'

If his intention was to produce an effect on us, he

quite failed, at least so far as I am concerned. His coarseness appeared to me quite natural, but his anger merely assumed. I believe that, generally speaking, the impression was the same on all present, although the greater part tried to rouse themselves to a different feeling. My impression is, indeed, that the scandal brought about by that explosion of brutality was the determining cause of the measure of which the new *auditeurs* were the victims. A distinction was made between the old and the new nominees; we were no longer admitted to the sittings at which the Emperor presided, doubtless because of our not being deemed sufficiently warm in our imperialism. It was decided that, in future, admission to those sittings should be regarded as a reward, and whenever the Emperor arrived, the last nominated *auditeurs* were requested to leave. Soon afterwards, however, the Emperor started for the army in Germany.

I stayed in Paris during the first half of the campaign of 1809. A few days after the battle of Wagram, I was sent to Vienna. It was the custom, since the last campaigns, to send, every week, an *auditeur* to headquarters. He was usually instructed to remit to M. de Bassano the despatch-box containing the various communications, ministerial or otherwise,

which the Arch-Chancellor addressed to the Emperor ; and, when the *auditeur* chosen for that duty was in favour with the Arch-Chancellor, the latter, having previously given him all necessary instructions, directed him to reply to the questions which the Emperor might put to him. I was not one of those favourite *auditeurs*, although I had no occasion to complain of my chiefs in general, or of the Arch-Chancellor in particular : I was very little known to them. Therefore, I started in complete ignorance of the contents of the despatch-box, except that I knew the decisions of the Conseil d'État on certain special points, thus running the risk of being found unprepared should the Emperor have questioned me.

On my arrival at Vienna, M. de Bassano, to whom I delivered the despatch-box, took me at about eleven in the morning to Schönbrunn, the residence of the Emperor of Austria, then occupied by his victorious foe. I waited from eleven till seven before the Emperor gave orders to admit me. I spent those eight hours in talking and walking about on the terrace with the persons who, by their duty or their circumstances, were placed in pretty much the same position as myself. Amongst them was M. Denon, who told me the following anecdote : ‘ I had accompanied General

Bonaparte to Egypt. One evening, it was the very day of the battle of the Pyramids, at the time when, being very tired, I was about to take some rest, the General, pointing his finger in the direction of the Pyramids, from which we were not far distant, said to me, "We must go there to-morrow morning." "Oh no!" I replied, "we have got time before us; who knows even if ever we shall see France again?" "We must go there to-morrow morning," sternly insisted the General; "who knows if a similar occasion will ever offer?" Such a suggestion was a command; I went the next morning to visit the Pyramids, and was well advised in doing so, for after that day, however anxious I was to do so, I never saw them again.'

Having waited about eight hours, I saw the Emperor leave his study to go to dinner; he passed me, spoke a few words in a brusque tone, and went away.

Such was my interview. I returned to Vienna both pleased and vexed—vexed at not having been called, pleased at not having been put to too severe a test.

I remained three weeks in Vienna, waiting until a decision should be taken about me. Expectant *auditeurs* were lodged at the State Chancellerie, a building close to the imperial palace, and the same where Prince Metternich since resided. The premises were

empty and quite unfurnished; to each of us was allotted a small room, with a miserable bed, two straw bottomed chairs, and a deal table. Madame Bassano and M. Daru, Commissary-General of the Army, kept open table for us.

At Vienna I met numerous generals and other officers whom I had known in Paris. All of them, and, I am bound to add, the marshals themselves, and even the eminent personages whom I was in the habit of meeting at M. de Bassano's, ardently longed for peace, though they scarcely dared to hope for it—secretly cursing their master—and, comparing the army as it was to what they had known it to be, expressed grave apprehensions for the future.

With some of these officers I went over the battle-fields of Essling and of Wagram, the island of Lobau and the principal military positions with which the banks of the Danube were, as it were, bestrewn. All the traces of war were still visibly to be seen, and one might say still bleeding. The beautiful village of Essling, which had been taken and retaken so many times, was gradually recovering itself—the poor inhabitants were timorously re-entering their ruined houses. On the battlefield of Wagram one saw where the attack of Marshal Macdonald had taken place, the

position being clearly shown by half-buried corpses. The whole plain along the banks of the Danube was covered with crops which were half destroyed by the effects of fire from the shells, and one could see the dead bodies of the wounded who had fallen victims to this conflagration lying scattered thickly about, and exposed to the sun, which thoroughly scorched them up. It was a sorrowful spectacle, which did not, as formerly, revive the joy of victory, the pride of power, the spirit and the impulse of conquest. The aspect of the country, the appearance of the city of Vienna itself, all glittering as it was with helmets and breastplates, was sad and dull; the air of the conquerors in the brutality of their actions was no more cheerful than that of the conquered: both spoke bitterly of their misery and of their sufferings, and if one may believe those who had the closest intercourse with the Master, he was himself no better pleased, and no more confident.

I was beginning to find my stay in Vienna rather dull, when I received an appointment. It was at just about the time that my colleague, M. de Tournon, was sent to Rome as Prefect, and the appointment did not seem strange, either to him or to anyone else. The annexation of Rome to the French Empire, and the

imprisonment of the Pope, had appeared a simple matter, and one of no consequence to all the servants of the Empire. It was to them equally simple and of no more consequence to be excommunicated, and to undertake the administration of the patrimony of S. Peter. Camille de Tournon, whom we used to call in joke 'Furius Camillus Capitolinus,' shared this indifference, which was common to all of us. It is very doubtful whether nowadays one would find such a complaisant frame of mind amongst honourable and sensible men.

I was sent to Hungary as commissary to the *comitat* of Raab-Eisenburg. Until then, all the part of Hungary occupied by the French troops had been placed under the orders of one single commissary, who, at that time, was M. de Ricci, a friend of M. de Joncourt and of my own family.

I have good reasons to believe that it was not owing to M. de Ricci's administration having failed to give satisfaction that his district was divided; the cause of that step was a more general one. The Emperor preferred employing in the commissariat younger men to men of riper years; he found the former more active, more enterprising, more anxious to oppose themselves to the peculations of the Commissions de Guerre, more determined to protect the inhabitants against exactions of

generals and other officers. He himself encouraged their resistance ; and, in the conflicts which arose from the zeal of the *auditeur* and the general requirements of the army, his decision always went in favour of the *auditeur*. M. Daru, without the least scruple, and though he could not allege even the shadow of a grievance against M. de Ricci, split into three different jurisdictions the district administered by that officer, and appointed to two of them two young fellows whom he saw without appointment and anxious to turn their services to good account.

M. de Ricci, with whom I had long been acquainted, received me with great friendliness, on the occasion of my passing through Pressburg on my way to Raab ; he gave me some excellent advice, and handed over to me the statistical notes which he had prepared respecting the *comitat* of Raab and Eisenburg. These notes supplied me with the substance of my great work on the economical and administrative position of those two *comitats* ; which work will be found amongst my papers—a circumstance which absolves me from going into fuller details here on the matter. The object I had in view in that work was merely to reproduce the impressions left upon me by the events which I witnessed and by the persons whom I have known, at the

same time referring my readers to the documents which I had carefully collected and classified respecting all comments upon facts and things, or regarding exact particulars as to the state of affairs and the conduct of the persons mentioned.

M. de Narbonne was in command at Raab. M. de Bassano, knowing the friendship which existed between us, had brought us together, a delicate and considerate proceeding for which I always felt indebted to him. The perfect understanding which never ceased, and never could cease between us, rendered the relations existing between the civil and the military administration easy and agreeable. In all my quarrels with the generals of the Army of Italy, I was always backed by M. de Narbonne, and, when Prince Eugène or his familiars spoke, with the soldierly language peculiar to the time, about shooting down any commissary who might prove recalcitrant to their wishes, their threats left me quite unconcerned.

My duty was to take in hand the civil administration of the country, to place myself at the head of the various authorities appointed to that administration, and to arrange with them regarding the conduct of each branch of the public service. I had to superintend the return of all the ordinary and extraordinary

taxes, to remit to the army treasury the amount left after deducting the sums indispensable for the management of affairs. It was also part of my business to correspond regularly with the Commissary-General of the whole army and the Paymaster-General. That constituted much responsibility for a young man so wanting in experience as I was then ; but it was also a salutary exercise for those manly qualities—activity, foresight, resolution, firmness, and daily attention to everything.

I believe I did not unsatisfactorily perform my task ; I, at least, came in for a very small share of the rebukes of which M. Daru was rather lavish towards his youthful assistants. Those rebukes, it is true, only fell, as a rule, on those who went out of their way to seek them at Vienna, under some pretext or other—weariness, worry, a taste for dissipation, or for anything else. I had resolved to avoid that breaker carefully, and I kept my resolve. During all the time of my stay at Raab, I never left the territory confided to my administration ; and, thanks to that precaution, I avoided reprimands which, had I shown my face and given occasion to think of me, I should doubtless have incurred, whether justly or unjustly.

I deserve little credit for my prudence in this matter.

Intercourse with M. de Narbonne was full of charm. His cheerful disposition captivated the inhabitants of Raab and of the surrounding district quite as much as his justice and his kindness disarmed their hostility.

The population of the districts occupied by the French army in Hungary entirely lacked originality, and was in no respect remarkable. The nobility went to Buda under the protection of the Austrian Court and army; the Bishop of Raab had followed suit. The only difference between the middle classes of that town and those of other European cities was the superiority of the intellectual culture of the former. They spoke fluently a broken Latin mixed with German idioms. According to competent judges, the Hungarian they spoke was not pure; but, everything considered, my opinion is that, even at the present day, it would scarcely be possible to find in France a fourth-rate town containing such a number of intelligent men possessed of general information, and acquainted with the current state of the affairs of their country.

The middle classes of the town of Adimburg, the capital of the *comitat* of Eisenburg, were of a still higher intellectual level than those of Raab. They were more dignified; they had more pride and resolution. Frequent contentions took place between us and

the town council; discernment and perseverance were greatly needed to carry on the debate, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we obtained from it all that *the right of the strongest* (the only fit expression to use in this instance) entitled us to. I have retained a very high opinion of that council, and I would fain be assured that, at the time of the two invasions to which we had to submit, the municipal councils of the chief French towns displayed as much firmness and moderation.

As for the peasants of the two *comitats*, in spite of the hussar uniform worn by them, they were still in a state of almost complete serfdom. They obeyed without a murmur, and supplied grain, forage, and means of transport in the most submissive manner. Of course, we must bear in mind that the uniform was nothing but the Hungarian national costume borrowed from civil life, and introduced into cavalry regiments.

During my stay at Raab, I often went to Altenburg with M. de Narbonne.

Altenburg is a little town situated between Raab and the fortress of Komorn, where peace was being negotiated. The plenipotentiaries were, on our side, M. de Champagny, Foreign Secretary; on that of Austria, M. de Metternich, Austrian Ambassador to

Paris before the war of 1809, and now destined to replace M. de Stadion, then Foreign Secretary of Austria. M. de Nugent assisted M. de Metternich. The Emperor of Austria had left his army, and had taken up his residence at the Castle of Dotie, a few leagues from Altenburg.

All the most eminent personages of the Court of Austria—all those, at least, who were on terms of intimacy with the Emperor, rushed to the centre of negotiations, ardently wishing for peace, though they had but a poor hope of securing it. Such were also the views entertained by the French plenipotentiaries, by M. de Champagny personally, and by the heads of his department. Circumstances proved, however, that, in that respect at least, M. de Champagny was only partly acquainted with the intentions of his master, the Emperor wishing for peace, but reserving to himself to make Austria pay for it as dearly as possible. Altogether, the outlook of the Conference was not promising, although the important personages who composed it or attended its sittings affected the greatest confidence in its issue under the mask of the most lighthearted indifference.

Everybody knows how these negotiations ended. The Emperors having agreed to exchange their views

directly, without any other intermediary than M. de Bubna, who was to carry their messages, the Altenburg Conference died a natural death, after the waste of much time and paper.

During his constant journeys between Schönbrunn and Dotie, M. de Bubna usually stopped at Raab, and came to breakfast or to dine with M. de Narbonne, whom he had known in Paris. Although his outward appearance was that of a soldier, frank, open, even a little brusque, his was a singularly subtle, quick, sharp, and inventive mind. I took great pleasure in hearing him talk, and in conversing, after he had gone, with M. de Narbonne about the true sense of the semi-confidences of which he was so lavish towards us, apparently supposing M. de Narbonne possessed of an influence which the latter had not acquired, and which, when he did so, never was very great.

Peace put a stop to those journeys backwards and forwards ; it delighted the army all the more because of its being unexpected. During the time that elapsed between the signature of the Peace of Vienna and the evacuation of Raab, I saw, on his way to Vienna, the aged Prince of Ligne, the old friend of M. de Narbonne and of Madame de Staël, just as he is depicted in his letters and in his writings—a cheerful, pleasant man, a

capital story-teller, and though *laudator temporis acti*, yet the admirer of the manners of the period; very fond of ridiculing the Austrian Court, and, according to my ideas, very flippant for an old man of eighty, a field-marshal with a hoary head, and covered with scars.

When we left Raab we blew up the fortifications of that place—a sad farewell, for which the only thing that can be said is that it was conformable to the law of nations. General Bertrand came to superintend this work of destruction. I carefully followed all its details: at the foot of the walls of each bastion and courtine, holes were dug and then filled with powder; every hole communicated with the outside by means of linen bags also filled with powder, and the outward extremity of which opened out into a small wooden board. When all the holes were thus loaded and arranged, an artilleryman ran at full speed all along the wall, and dropped a squib on each wooden board. He had no sooner turned the angle and was out of danger, than the explosion took place, so exactly had the time it would take the powder to catch been calculated to correspond to the time it would take the artilleryman to run along the wall. I saw the latter tremble on its base, oscillate for a few moments, then completely give

way, the summit falling on to the base amidst clouds of dust, though almost without any noise from the explosion.

Before leaving Raab, I learnt, with some consternation, that instead of returning to France, and, perhaps, being promoted there, I was to be appointed paymaster to one of the regiments of Croats ceded to France by the treaty of peace. Under that name must be understood a military district. My residence was to be at Pétrinia, on the banks of the Unna, which separates Croatia from Bosnia.

I returned to Vienna, where I remained for about three weeks. As it was still occupied by the French army at the time of my arrival, the military authorities lodged me in the house of Count Nickle Esterhazy, who received me with politeness, and soon afterwards admitted me into his family circle.

He insisted upon keeping me after the departure of the French army, and loaded me with every care, attention, and consideration. My three weeks' stay in that hospitable mansion was most pleasant, and I divided my time between my excellent host and the *hôtel* of the Prince de Ligne.

This *hôtel*, situated on the ramparts, was literally a parrot's-cage. It consisted of a dining-room on the

ground-floor, a drawing-room on the first, and of a bedroom on the second floor. One went up from one to the other by very steep stairs. Each room was furnished with some straw-bottomed chairs, a deal table, and a few other little articles of equal magnificence. There it was that the Prince de Ligne received every evening, and even, if necessary, every morning, a small number of people who cared for the pleasures of conversation more than for anything else. There a supper was served regularly every night, consisting of a skinny fowl, and some spinach and hard-boiled eggs. The evening, and often even the morning, was passed in endless talk, in which all the events of the Court of France under Louis XV. and Louis XVI. were related in a style and manner in conformity with the habits of that frivolous period; where the Prince de Ligne compared the feats of the Seven Years' War with the battles of the Revolution and of the Empire; where everyone, even a very young man like myself, was constantly tempted to take part in the conversation, and to put in his word, whether it were good or bad.

The family of the Prince was very amiable, and consisted of his three daughters: Princess Clary, Countess Palfy, and Princess Flore, afterwards Madame de

Spiegel, and of his granddaughter, Princess Christine, afterwards Madame O'Donnell, the natural daughter of his son.

The time which I passed in this calm and peaceful company appeared very short to me, especially when I thought of the strange solitude for which I was bound. Before I left, I saw a very touching spectacle. I refer to the re-entry of the Emperor of Austria into his capital, after all the painful events which preceded the wretched peace of Vienna. His people received him affectionately and respectfully; it was really like a family receiving its father after a long course of misfortunes, and sparing him all reproaches. If reproaches were deserved, his people deserved them no less than their sovereign. It certainly was Austria which, taking advantage of the absence of the Emperor Napoleon in Spain, and of the complications which kept him there, declared war against him. Thus she appeared in the character of the aggressor. But was Austria really the aggressor? Was there another chance? Was there any other means of escape from the terrible oppression with which France was then weighing down the Continent?

I left Vienna at last, not without regret, overwhelmed with tokens of friendship, of consideration, and of at-

tention from all those who had received me as a friend, instead of treating me as an enemy; and amongst these new and kind friends I must reckon the Prince d'Arenberg, the friend of Mirabeau, of Queen Marie Antoinette, the same whose memoirs M. de Bacourt has recently brought to light. I do not deceive myself at all as to the reason of the kind reception which so many persons, with so many different titles to distinction, accorded me; my personal merit had very little to do with it, and the affection which M. de Narbonne showed me was the sole cause of it.

When I left Vienna, I went through Carinthia and Carniola, and arrived at Laibach, the capital of the Illyrian provinces, at the beginning of the rainy season. There I found M. Dauchy, Commissary-General, under whose orders I was placed for the future.

I remained at Laibach only a few days, and then went on to Pétrinia by a very roundabout route, by way of Trieste, Fiume, and Carlstadt, travelling through nearly the whole of Croatia in detestable weather, and over shocking roads. At Fiume, I made the acquaintance of General Bachelu, who was in command of the town, and who came, by order of the Emperor, to inspect the state of defence of the Illyrian provinces. General Bachelu told me, in his study, with much

naïveté mingled with humour, the following anecdote, of which I have often thought since :

‘I was,’ he said, ‘in a small town.’ (He told me its name, but it now escapes my memory.) ‘The Emperor had ordered me to examine the state of the place and its means of defence. I remarked to him that, in order to turn those fortifications to the best advantage, it would be necessary to knock down a lot of small houses surrounded by gardens, which were in the way of the ditches and outworks, adding that as the place was of very small importance, and the measure would be rather a harsh one, I scarcely felt justified in resorting to it. I tried to point out to him other points where a small amount of work would suffice to attain the only object which could reasonably be aimed at. The Emperor listened attentively, without interrupting me ; but his looks made up for his want of words. When I asked him what his orders were, he got up without replying, and then said to me : “When a man is an engineer officer, he is bound to be an engineer officer.” Then he walked quickly up and down the whole length of the room, and repeated : “An engineer is bound to be an engineer. It is not worth while being an engineer, if one is not an engineer ;” then, after walking up and down like that

for about a quarter of an hour, he opened the door of his own room, and said to me as he went out, banging it violently behind him: "And an engineer should be a man without any pity." But he gave me no orders, and nothing came of the matter.'

From Fiume I started for Carlstadt, which is the capital of Croatia, properly so called, where General Carra Saint-Cyr, whom I had known for a long time, was in command; and at last, towards the beginning of the Carnival, which certainly would not be a very gay one there, I arrived at Pétrinia. I had, however, no chance of finding this out for myself, for I had hardly begun to unpack my modest belongings and to settle down, when I received an order from the Duke of Ragusa, the Governor-General of the Illyrian provinces, to return to Trieste.

The Duke of Ragusa was wise enough to comprehend that it would be absurd to try ever to transform a regiment of Croats into a French *commune*; he very reasonably felt that the organization of this regiment, which was half civil, half military, must indefinitely remain just as it was. That organization, which was the work of Prince Eugene in the palmy days of the Austrian monarchy, whilst acting as a bulwark against the Turks, also provided him with excellent regiments of

infantry which cost him nothing during times of peace, since each family maintained the farmer-soldier which it furnished to the conscription. As they were much feared by the Turks, these families of soldiers protected the whole southern frontier of the monarchy, and kept all the border populations in check.

I returned to Trieste. There I found M. de Narbonne, who was in command ; he introduced me to the Duke of Ragusa, who received me with great kindness.

At this time the Duke of Ragusa, who was about forty years of age, was of medium height, a strongly and well built man, with dark, almost black, face, and with a truly martial air. He was a nobleman by birth, and, there is no denying it, he never allowed the fact to be lost sight of. Having entered the Academy of Artillery when quite a youth, his scientific education was far superior to his literary one, but he was nevertheless a cultured man. Proud he was. Who was not so at that time ? Who would not have been so in his high situation ? Although he seemed rather extravagant at first, in his general manners he was, taking him all in all, very indulgent and obliging. He prided himself, and that not without reason, on being a good administrator ; he was enlightened, vigilant, a hard worker, very attentive to business, took great care of the

soldiers, and treated the people of the country with justice. He was very much beloved by the military, and honoured and respected by the generals who served under his orders. Misfortune and the injustice of mankind made him hard and bitter towards the end of his life, and caused him to write in his memoirs, published after his death, some things which are much to be regretted. But he was worthy of a better fate, for he was worthy of not having done those things which he did, and of not having written that which he wrote.

His dream at that period, and one which was not at all unreasonable, was to establish a viceroyalty in the Illyrian provinces, founded, however, on very different lines from that which M. Dauchy, Commissary-General, was instructed to impose, without any distinction, on the conquered countries. As, however, his views did not in the least influence the Duke of Ragusa, M. Dauchy himself applied for, and obtained, his own recall. The Duke of Ragusa had sent in his resignation to the Emperor, and was awaiting his reply.

He made me the proposal that, whilst he was waiting, I should undertake the duties of Secretary-General to his administration, an offer which I gladly accepted.

He had very justly placed full confidence in one of his aides-de-camp, Colonel Jarret, a man whose judgment

was sound and trustworthy, and whose character was even more so ; a most intellectual, well-read, hard-working man, and one who was thoroughly, though not blindly, devoted to his chief.

All the work to be done was divided between him and me, but by no means equally. Jardet continued to superintend every department which had anything to do with the army ; all the confidential reports between the Duke of Ragusa and the Imperial Government fell to his lot, whilst I was merely entrusted with the general correspondence and the official reports to the civil authorities.

We worked together, however, in drawing up the memorial which the Duke of Ragusa submitted to the Emperor with regard to the military organization of Croatia, and as to the necessity of preserving it intact, except so far as to place a French colonel at the head of each Croatian regiment.

I had brought some particulars on this matter with me from Pétrinia, which were of use in supplementing those which the Duke of Ragusa had already got together. They will be found amongst my papers. The Duke of Ragusa deserves the chief praise for this excellent memorial on a very intricate subject ; but it was Jardet who drew up nearly the whole of it. It

was, I believe, never officially published, but it was printed and put into the hands of the Conseil d'État. I did not happen to be in Paris when it was submitted to its members, and I have not been able to procure a copy of it ; but the review which bears the title 'Bibliothèque Universelle,' printed at Geneva, and which is a sequel to the 'Bibliothèque Britannique,' has been more fortunate than I. The memorial is to be found there ; if not in its entirety, yet in all its essentials.

My short stay at Trieste was not calculated to lessen my desire to return to France. I lived *en famille* with M. de Narbonne and his staff, and I was also very intimate with the staff of the Governor-General.

It was at Trieste that M. de Narbonne met his mother, the Duchess of Narbonne, again. She had left France with Mesdames Royales,* and had been their faithful companion in the land of their exile. She remained faithful to their memory when she could offer no further sacrifice to their misfortunes. She was a high-born lady and a noble soul. Never in all my life have I been more impressed. She was dignified, proud, and yet very gentle. She had very small means, and lived in absolute retirement. She never received any strangers or any of the inhabitants of Trieste. In

* The title given to the daughters of the Kings of France.

short, she would have nothing to do with anyone who had not been about the person or in the service of Mesdames Royales. She even kept those to whom her doors were not closed, her own son equally with myself, whom she had admitted as a special favour, at a distance. She had a wonderfully well-balanced mind ; she never uttered a word of complaint or of recrimination, and never alluded to the past. She seemed like a queen who had had to mourn the loss of her husband and did not regret the loss of her supreme rank.

M. de Narbonne had also met again at Trieste one of his friends, Count Pontgibaud, who had turned banker during the Emigration, and who carried on that business most honestly, skilfully, and successfully, but at the same time too generously and with too much of the feelings of a noble to be able to make a large fortune in business.

The Duchess of Ragusa very soon arrived to throw open and to preside over the house of her husband. She was the daughter of the well-known banker, Perregaux, and the sister of one of my colleagues at the Conseil d'État. I had often met her in Paris. I had spent days, I may say weeks, at her house at Viry. I always found her to be a woman of a happy, lively disposition, fond of society, conversation, and of those

entertainments at which she did the honours so well. During her stay at Trieste, although she certainly regretted Paris, she seemed to live in thorough harmony with her husband ; and I, for my part, never knew of anything which could justify those reproaches which, in any case, had far better have been spared her.

I was not, however, destined to enjoy a position which was as agreeable to my tastes as it was favourable to my promotion, for any length of time. M. de Narbonne left us, having been appointed Plenipotentiary Minister in Bavaria, and was fully informed of the negotiations which prepared the way for the marriage of the Emperor Napoleon. The Duke of Ragusa received orders to send those *auditeurs* back to France whose office as commissary was abolished when Croatia was retained in its former military position. I parted from him with genuine regret, and I have reason to believe that this regret was mutual. It also grieved me to part from several persons who had welcomed me at Trieste, above all from the two aides-de-camp of the Duke of Ragusa, Jarde and Denis, the latter of whom became famous under the name of Damrémont, and who both met with a glorious death on the field of battle. It was hard, too, for me to separate myself from young Aubernon, the son of the Ordonnateur-Général of the

army, one of the friends I most often met, and with whom I preserved the longest relations during the course of my public life.

Rougier Lavergerie, the son of a prefect; Arnaud, the son of the poet; Cochelet, brother to the maid of honour of Queen Hortense; and Létardi, M. de Corvetto's son-in-law, all of whom were my colleagues and my friends, and whom I left behind in Illyria, envied my fate; I myself was not disinclined to return the compliment.

I returned to France by way of Venice, Milan and Turin. I only spent a few days in each of those famous cities. I did not know anyone in Milan. In Venice I might have called on General Menou, who was in command there, but I had never been introduced to him, and little wished to come in contact with him. His conversion, if the expression may fitly be used, from Christianity to Islamism, and the marriage which followed upon his scandalous and ridiculous conduct, inspired me with unsurmountable loathing. I was wrong, perhaps, for he was a good man at heart, and the uncle of my sister. Since his death, I have had occasion to meet the woman whom he bought to make her his wife; she had embraced Christianity, and was burly, aged, and stupid. She might, to perfection,

have played the part of a tavern-maid. It was, indeed, hardly worth while to change one's religion in order to marry one's cook !

Venice was, at that time, devastated and quite deserted. The aristocratic and the wealthy portion of the population had left it. The windows of the palaces were closed wherever any were left ; the magnificent pictures profusely distributed among the churches were covered with smoke and mildew ; the theatre was closed ; Saint Mark's Square was dull and gloomy ; only a few aged guides remained to show visitors over the palaces and other buildings. The whole place presented a spectacle of desolation.

Milan, on the contrary, was gay and brilliant ; it was then a capital. The viceroy and his lady lived there in great style ; their court was animated : fine horses, gorgeous carriages—nothing was wanting. I have visited that city since then, but I did not find it in the same state of splendour.

Whilst passing through Turin I called on M. Alexandre de Lameth, my cousin, who was then prefect, and I returned to Paris by way of Mont Cenis and Lyons, towards the spring of 1810.

II.

1810.

ON my return to France, after ten months' absence, I requested to be admitted again to the Conseil d'État, with the favour of attending imperial sittings. That was but justice, and it was promised to me ; but I had to wait for the new quarterly list. I took advantage of this delay to pay a few visits to my family, which had of late undergone singular vicissitudes.

At the time of the coronation M. d'Argenson, had come to Paris as President* of his canton.† Like all his colleagues, he had, though much against his will, received the Cross of the Legion of Honour ; but he had succeeded in evading that kind of civil conscription into which the Emperor forced all persons who led an honourable and independent existence, in order to secure the fusion of all parties.

The respite was not of long duration.

* Chief Magistrate.

† One of the administrative divisions of a French department.

Having, later on, been called to Paris to figure, again as President of his canton, at one of those constitutional parades which the Emperor delighted in giving from time to time before the public, he was, quite unexpectedly, appointed Préfet of the Department of Deux Nèthes (Antwerp), and thus placed in the alternative position of being sent into exile, followed by continued persecution, or of accepting the most important prefecture of France, that where huge civil, military and maritime works were being carried out with the utmost activity.

I can speak freely of M. d'Argenson—I owe him everything. The difference of our principles respecting religious and philosophical, and of our views on social or political questions, never altered the tender affection he bore to me, nor did it in the least diminish the tender gratitude I always felt towards him.

There were two very distinct beings in M. d'Argenson: the sincere and disinterested dreamer, and the business man who, in certain circumstances, might have proved a first-rate statesman.

Having entered society at the time when the ideas of 1789 were at a climax, he carried them, at a very early age, far beyond their legitimate bearing. He was, at heart and by conviction, a Socialist. He

believed and, whenever he had any chance of being understood, he professed, that the repartition of property in this world being the result of fraud and violence, it was necessary to regulate it by means of an equitable transaction. He regarded it as a duty for all honest men to devote themselves to the carrying out of such an undertaking; and whenever a political crisis was imminent or broke out, he was one of those honest men, ready to risk fortune and life for the cause. It was indeed his cause, for he alone was earnest about it, though never likely to gain anything by it.

Apart from this, and in the ordinary course of life, M. d'Argenson was a man of rare sagacity, of a firm and upright mind, of noble and lofty feelings; he was diligent, strict respecting the exercise of his rights, and very shrewd regarding men, whom he esteemed collectively but despised individually more than was reasonable. His delicacy could stand any test; he was resolute and intrepid; in his domestic and social relations he was reserved, taciturn, and perhaps morose, though amiable and charming towards those he loved and in whom he placed his confidence.

Being such as I depict him—and as such he will live in my memory as long as I breathe—he experienced an extreme repugnance to serve the Imperial Government.

Not that in his heart he preferred any other ; for his political speculations did not stop at this or that form of tangible and lasting organization. To reform society before thinking of governing it, that was his ideal wish. But he did not like the Emperor, and he detested absolute power. Having, however, been urged by his friends and family, he assented to the proposal made to him, at the same time warning those who pressed him that their prudence would be of no avail, that ‘a divorce for incompatibility of character’ must soon be pronounced, and that the persecution following upon it could not be long delayed. He was Prefect of Antwerp for about three years.

The activity, vigilance and enlightenment which he displayed in the conduct of affairs did him the greatest credit ; he was feared, respected, and, thanks to my mother, even liked by the people of a country which, much against its will, was bearing the yoke of France. But his freedom of speech, his proud and firm attitude, the impossibility of obtaining from him what he thought contrary to justice or to reason, constantly placed him in opposition to the chief and to the collateral authorities. Sometimes he used to tell us curious anecdotes on this subject ; I will quote but one, which, however, is characteristic of the imperial *régime*.

M. Réal was in Antwerp. He was one of those Jacobins who freely accepted being converted to the principles of absolute power, and who rather proudly wore the livery of their new master. Much more lucky than Barrère, his former colleague and friend, who had become a common detective, Réal was Conseiller d'État and entrusted with one of the divisions of the police of the empire ; Antwerp belonged to his jurisdiction.

It was a Saturday evening, on the eve of some grand festival, and M. Réal, having inquired from the Prefect whether the latter would attend the procession and High Mass, M. d'Argenson having informed him that such was not his intention, M. Réal saw him privately, rebuked him—at first with kindness, then quite in earnest—and, in most edifying language, exhorted him to do good and to show a good example. That was precisely the language most likely to induce M. d'Argenson to persist in his resolution. He hated hypocrisy still more than the making a public show of himself. However, he promised to gratify M. Réal's piety, and to see that a seat as high as his position was exalted be prepared for his accommodation in the cathedral. Early the next day, he took M. Réal there, in order to show to him that everything was in accordance with his wishes. The platform was

raised, and on it there was a large easy-chair with crimson velvet cushion. On his way out, as he passed the pulpit, M. Réal pointed to it with his finger and said, with a cunning smile, ‘And to think that ten years ago we used to preach theo-philanthropy in that very pulpit.’

M. d’Argenson simply shrugged his shoulders and turned his back on M. Réal.

That which caused the situation to be precarious was precisely that which made it durable, or, rather, that which enabled it to last. Every day bringing its ultimatum, there was hesitation to look upon it as being earnest. Two events brought the issue about.

The disgrace of M. de Talleyrand, which followed the affair of Spain (I do not decide the point), brought about the exile of a friend of his—M. de Montrond, a gentleman well-known in Paris and in England for the quickness of his wit and his happy repartees; a most singular being, in whom certain high qualities redeemed, in some respects, that which was questionable in his life and reprehensible in his morals.

M. d’Argenson and M. de Montrond had been friends in their youth, and their intimacy had never suffered from the diversity of the lives they led. He selected Antwerp for his residence. M. d’Argenson welcomed him as a friend, opened his house to him, introduced him every-

where, did everything to make Antwerp agreeable to him. He received repeated cautions on this account, but to these M. d'Argenson did not pay the slightest heed.

That already, as they say in diplomatic parlance, created strained relations. Then came the affair of the Antwerp customs. Frauds had been committed in the management of those customs. The custom-house staff was accused of having been concerned in the frauds, and, not without cause, they were also ascribed to the carelessness of the town council, and chiefly of the mayor. Having pointed out these excesses, M. d'Argenson requested the prosecution and the replacing of the suspected officials; but he insisted upon their being replaced without noise or scandal, in the first place because* it seemed unjust to him to allow of their probity being suspected, and, in the second place, because of their belonging to the highest circles of Antwerp society, and also because of the difficulty which had been experienced in obtaining their adhesion to the imperial *régime*. A merciless prosecution might furnish arms to the reaction. The Imperial Government thought differently. Under the pretence of clearing up the whole affair, it was not sorry to find the

* Seeing the circumstances of the frauds.—TRANSLATOR.

opportunity of somehow taking its revenge of the malcontents. M. d'Argenson having, however, declined to lend himself to the scheme, as he had been called upon to do, his refusal proved the drop which caused the cup to overflow, and, to his great satisfaction, he was recalled.

Everybody knows what followed. The officials of the custom-house and the municipal authorities were committed to take their trial. Public opinion became excited; the jury unanimously acquitted all the prisoners. The Emperor, enraged at the issue, instructed the Senate to declare null and void the verdict of the jury; he even gave orders for the prosecution of the jurymen—an excess of power unheard-of before, even during his reign, but which, happening on the eve of his fall, had no other result but to hasten the revolt of Belgium, and to throw it open to the allies.

To close this digression, I will at once relate the sequel of all this, more especially as regards M. de Montrond.

Already exiled from Paris, he was likewise exiled from Antwerp, sent to Châtillon-sur-Seine, and forbidden to leave the place. However, wearying of such a dull residence, he obtained a passport for Spain under an assumed name, had four post-horses put to his

travelling carriage, and crossed France in great haste, passing himself for some great personage entrusted with a secret mission. Having reached Barcelona, which, for him, was no safer residence than France, he embarked at night on a fishing-smack, and took refuge on board one of the ships of the English fleet, in command of Admiral Keith.

There fresh trouble awaited him. The story of his mysterious journey had reached the ears of the Admiral. He was suspected of being General Mouton, one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp, and, in ignorance of the object of his visit to the English fleet, he was closely watched, whilst instructions were being obtained from London and information collected from his friends in England. In a few days his wit and his genial temper won for him the sympathy of all the officers composing the staff of the Admiral's ship, and the whole crew sided with him against the Admiral himself; so much so that one day at table, and as dessert was being served, and as many bottles had already been emptied, the Admiral having, whilst looking at the Frenchman, uttered the following brutal and offensive remark, 'I am of opinion that all Frenchmen, without exception, are rogues,' M. de Montrond, looking him in the face, replied, 'As for me, I am of opinion that all English-

men are gentlemen ; but I make exceptions.' The Admiral took the hint, and changed his attitude. I have mentioned that he was happy in repartee. The one just related may count among the best and the boldest. The information received from London being favourable to him, he started for England, where he stayed until the Restoration.

As for myself, I spent in Antwerp all my leisure time. There I found M. d'Argenson giving all his thoughts to his usual occupations, but, more than ever sick of the imperial *régime*, preparing to retire, and wondering whether it would not be better to forestall compulsory exile by a voluntary one.

There also I found my mother, quite absorbed in her domestic pre-occupations, in her books, in her charming letters, always the same : kind-hearted, lively, full of gaiety, matchless as regards the evenness of her temper, with inexhaustible powers of conversation, taking an interest in everything and giving up everything without the slightest effort. During the early part of my youth I spent several winters alone in her company without experiencing a single instant of void or dulness. At the most difficult periods of my life her prudence always was of great help to me. At home we used to call her Madame de Sévigné, and those who have

known her will agree that she fully deserved the compliment.

I was soon recalled to Paris. I re-entered the Conseil d'État, with the privilege of attending the imperial sittings, and, at my request, I was appointed in the section of Ponts et Chaussées.

M. Molé had just been selected as head of that department. Having been born in 1780, he was but five years my senior. His promotion had been rapid. Several causes had contributed to create promptly for him an exceptional position. In the first place, his name—the Emperor was fond of historic names. Then the little circle to which he belonged. I have already spoken of this coterie, whose chief members were M. de Chateaubriand, M. Joubert, and M. de Fontanes. Although quite a young man, M. Molé was the hope of that circle. In the last place, a book which he wrote under the title of ‘*Essais de morale et de politique.*’ The book was imbued with the spirit of ultramonarchical reaction prevalent at the time, but was written in a grave and sober style, flavouring of the seventeenth century. No doubt there was much in it to find fault with, and, later, the author himself confessed to its weak points. Nothing in it was, however, of a vulgar stamp, and I caused many of M. Molé’s

detractors to read it, who, much to their regret, could not help doing it some justice.

It was M. de Fontanes who acquainted the Emperor with the book and with the author ; but it was the latter who built his own fortune with the Master.

The Emperor was a great genius. He was the greatest of generals ; but he was also the greatest of *causeurs*. When he wished to make himself agreeable, so say the *connaisseurs* who approached him, nothing equalled the grace, the variety and the fecundity of his conversation on any subject whatever. His supreme rank did not, without a doubt, mar the effect, and it imparted special interest to the most insignificant topics ; his conversation, however, used to dwell on subjects far from insignificant.

M. Molé was the best of listeners. He used to grasp most delightfully the thought expressed to him, which, when need was, he completed, and in which he opportunely placed his own word. His large penetrating eyes caught it, so to speak, on the very lips. His noble and fine features reflected its least suggestion. In him the Emperor found someone to speak to, and to speak on any subject ; a sincere and enlightened partisan of his views, who not only understood, but reproduced them in lofty and elegant language ; a

natural adversary of the Jacobins and of the ideologists—the persons whom, at that time, the Emperor most detested. For the first time, perhaps, the Emperor's genius found itself 'in pleasant company,' if I may use the expression, and enjoyed it, if only because of the novelty of the thing.

M. Molé passed, therefore, rapidly through all the degrees. He became successively *auditeur*, *Maitre des Requêtes*, Prefect of Dijon, *Conseiller d'État*, and *Directeur-Général* of the *Ponts et Chaussées*, all within less than three years.

His merit was perhaps not in keeping with that unprecedented promotion, yet it was real. Although the Revolution had broken out whilst he was at college, and his studies had suffered accordingly, his was, nevertheless, a cultured mind. He had read our best authors with pleasure and advantage. Without being painstaking, he was fitted for public affairs; his judgment was sound, his foresight prompt and safe. He was only thirty years old, yet he imposed his authority on the *Conseil des Ponts et Chaussées*—a body composed of *savants* who were not wanting in vanity. In this case, again, the favour of the Master was not altogether opposed to the result. But the respect which he commanded was sincere; he kept all

his subordinates at a proper distance, and met to perfection the Emperor's purpose, which was to bring into the various administrative branches requiring special knowledge, applied science under the control of general common-sense—a very wise purpose indeed. In purely artistic matters, he allowed the broadest latitude to men of art, still he controlled all the rest: transactions, contracts, intercourse with the civil authorities, relations with owners of private property, etc. He instructed the *auditeurs* placed under him to draw up reports on all these various questions, and to propose their solution.

That gave us a real and, everything considered, a well-deserved importance.

M. Molé, who had received me most courteously and gracefully, soon intrusted me with a delicate mission. An old and lively dispute existed between the Prefect of the department of Sarthe and the chief engineer, who was supported by the ordinary engineer. The Prefect was warmly upheld in his pretensions by the Minister of the Interior, the engineer by the Conseil des Ponts et Chaussées. All the efforts made, either to clear up or to appease the disagreement, failed. M. Molé sent me on the spot, and instructed me to visit carefully the progress of the works throughout the

department, as though such were the sole object of my mission, and, unknown to the contending parties, to institute a private inquiry, for which I was to gather information only from trustworthy persons who were in a position to get at the bottom of affairs.

I was to find out those persons myself, and avoid their seeing through the object of my questions.

I spent several weeks in the department of Sarthe; I frequented all the roads and crossways. I also visited Mans society, and returned to Paris only after having collected all the information desired and prepared the solution of the difficulty by tracing its original cause.

In my papers will be found the minutes of my correspondence with M. Molé, who more than once, during the course of the events which, later on and in turn, brought us together or separated us, reminded me of this matter.

On my return to Paris I assiduously attended the sittings of the Conseil d'État. The Emperor used to convene it at Saint-Cloud, and some attention was necessary in order not to miss the sittings; sometimes the convocation was for seven in the morning, at other times the sittings were fixed for one o'clock in the afternoon and lasted until night.

The chief discussions of that time which I recollect related to the organization of Holland into French departments. After having ceded to his brother the Dutch Brabant, the Zeland, and the Gueldra, King Louis had at last made up his mind: he had abdicated in favour of his son; Holland had been first occupied by French troops, and then annexed to France.

Being called to a seat in the Conseil d'État, and to assist in the transformation of their own country, the most exalted personages of Holland displayed in those discussions the wisdom, the energy, and the coolness which are the national characteristics of Dutchmen. They opposed excellent reasons to the official and worrying pedantry which it was sought to substitute for their local customs. They confronted form with substance, elaborate precautions with their traditional probity, and statistics with common-sense. The Emperor usually decided the issue in their favour, and did not spare sarcasm to his ordinary advisers. He never grew tired of repeating to the latter that, in Dutch administration, everything was based upon the presumption of honesty and good sense, and in our own upon that of stupidity and fraudulent intent.

However, and notwithstanding the weight of imperial approbation, French administration carried the day in the long run.

Those grave discussions were not interrupted by the *faustissimæ nuptiæ* of the Emperor. He used to face everything. Business and pleasure went on together. Having, owing to the inferiority of my position, nothing to do officially with the event which was being celebrated by splendid festivities, I only attended them as a mere spectator; still, being young, anxious to see everything, and started in the official world, I scarcely missed one.

One morning—it was, I believe, at Compiègne—the crowd was rushing to the gallery, through which the Emperor was passing, now with the measured step of a Prince of ancient lineage, now with hurried and jerked strides. Everybody made room, and on each side stood in a row. Owing to circumstances quite independent of my will, I found myself in the first line. In the midst of so many stars and ribbons and embroidered robes and uniforms, the Emperor noticed my humble dress, came straight to me, and asked me for my name. I told it him; then, with a kindly smile, he spoke a few words to me respecting my stay in the Illyrian provinces, and moved on, satisfied, I suppose, to have, *in*

anima vili, given a proof of his *omniscience* and ubiquity. He was much admired for it.

Like many more, I was present at the ball, of dismal foreboding, which Prince Schwarzenberg gave in honour of the Emperor, lately divorced, and of the new Empress. I still fancy I see them, seated side by side, on two small contiguous thrones, in the farthest end of a wooden hall, erected in haste, but gorgeously decorated, and built against the drawing-room of the Montesson Pavilion, which stood in the angle formed by the Rue du Mont-Blanc and the Rue de Provence. The Emperor was radiant with joy ; still more so was the Empress—a Princess of rather thick features, good appearance, high colour, and apparently of a robust constitution ; such is at least the praise which, in several instances, is bestowed upon her by the illustrious and national historian of that period, still famous, though scarcely national, if the welfare and future of our country are to be taken into account.

Everybody knows that pride played an important part in the imperial choice ; the daughter of the *Cesars* was of a better house than a Russian Princess. Everybody knows also the part played by vanity in the order and pomp of the ceremonies. The ceremonial then observed was the faithful copy of that followed on the

occasion of the marriage of Louis XVI., of whom the Emperor often spoke as being his predecessor, and whom he sometimes termed his 'unfortunate uncle.' The marriage settlement of poor Marie Antoinette was scrupulously copied in drawing up the Imperial corresponding document; in order that everything should be correct, M. de Dreux-Brézé—the grand master of ceremonies in 1789, the Dreux-Brézé of Mirabeau—had been gravely consulted and had gravely and minutely furnished every detail. Providence, alas! took upon itself to carry on the counterfeit to the bitter end, and as regards catastrophes, to cause the copy to be the faithful reproduction of the original.

It was half-past eleven. I had taken up my position close to the chief entrance, in a corner of the room. My eyes wandered purposeless over the groups of dancers, whilst, I know not why, I was counting the number of issues which had been left on three sides, and recollecting, also I know not why, that two days before, at the ball given at the Hôtel des Invalides, all the company were shut up in a sort of wooden cage, with scarcely any means of exit, so that, had a fire broken out, not a single guest could have escaped, when suddenly looking up at the ceiling, I noticed an ornamental wreath catch fire and blaze up. I saw, I fancy I still see, Castellane,

the companion of my youth, perched up on his high legs, stretching up his long arms, in order to tear down the smoking wreath. I fancy I still see the Emperor, whose eyes were then animated with the glance of the battle-field, snatching hurriedly the Empress's arm, dragging her along in his rapid, though even and measured step. He pointed out with the hand that was left free the various doors to the affrighted guests, who shrieked without moving, and turned round to consider the extent of the disaster, as he descended the small stairs leading on to the garden.

He was well advised not to have hesitated, for his foot had scarcely reached the grass when all the chandeliers fell on the first-floor with a fearful crash; and he had hardly crossed the last garden when the staircase itself gave way under the weight of the people who sought to escape.

I saw, I fancy I still see, poor Prince Kourakin, eaten up with gout, covered with diamonds, and whose enormous body was caught in the ruins, from under which General Hulot, brother to the wife of Marshal Moreau, was endeavouring to extricate him with his remaining arm. I fancy I still hear the heart-rending shrieks of the victims, and those, perhaps no less so, of the friends and relations who were calling and looking

for each other in the darkness of the bowers, dimly illumined by the lanterns hung up in the trees. I fancy I still see—a sight which I scarcely expected—M. de Chauvelin knocking his head against the trees, and uttering loud and desperate lamentations because of his failing to discover his wife, who did not ordinarily seem so dear to his heart.

Three-quarters of an hour had been passed in carrying the wounded to M. Regnault de Saint - Jean d'Angely's *hôtel*, situated in the Rue de Provence, facing the garden, and in calming anxious people and consoling those whose friends or relations were dead or wounded, when we saw the Emperor coming back, wrapped in his gray frock-coat, his small hat placed straight on his head, and, if my memory is right, followed by the Grand Marshal Duroc and the Duke of Rovigo.

He had accompanied the Empress to the extremity of the Champs Élysées; there, he had left her to make her way alone to Saint-Cloud.

With his eyes fixed straight before him, and without uttering a single word, he proceeded to inspect the smoking ruins of the hall. I lost sight of him, plenty of people being much more anxious than I was to see the Master and to be seen. I was told, on the spot,

that the charred remains of the unfortunate Princess of Schwartzenberg, reduced to the size of a child six years old, and identified by her diamond necklace, which had remained intact, had been found in the Emperor's presence. She had, apparently, re-entered the burning hall in order to look for her daughter, and the flooring, which covered a small lake, dried up for the purpose of building the hall, had given way under her feet. We have all known, either in Paris, London, or Vienna, that daughter for whom the Princess lost her life. She was an amiable and cultured lady, whom the stern hand of Death soon ravished from the midst of the society of which she was the brightest ornament.

The Emperor remained scarcely more than an hour to inspect the scene of that fearful disaster, giving instructions, comforting or advising wherever required. It has often been related that, after his departure, and when the whole of the guests, those who were hurt and those who were not, had left, the attachés of embassies and their friends sat down to supper, and thus spent gaily the rest of the night. Having stayed very late in that place of desolation, I did not see anything of the kind, and feel convinced that the report is one of those stories which are circulated as the necessary

complement of all great catastrophes, and to satisfy the malevolence of the masses.

I returned home about three o'clock in the morning. I was then living in the Rue de la Madeleine, at the corner of the Rue de la Ville l'Évêque, in a house adjoining a timber-yard which has since disappeared. The terrible scenes I had just witnessed haunted my sleep, or rather that nervous slumber which follows upon great mental agitation, and during which we neither sleep nor wake. At daybreak I fell soundly asleep, but was suddenly roused. I was dreaming of what I had seen a few hours before, and it seemed to me as though the ceiling of the ballroom was falling over my head; and the fact was that one of the piles of timber in the adjoining yard had just tumbled down with a terrible noise. I rose hurriedly, saturated with cold perspiration.

That sad occurrence put a stop to the public rejoicings, and left far-seeing minds face to face with the anxieties, unmingled with any illusion, which the coming war with Russia, of which the Austrian marriage was but the prelude, and the still more inevitable schism in the Church, awakened.

Indeed, everybody knows that, six years after the signing of the Concordat, one of the two authors

of that eminently wise instrument was detaining the other a close prisoner at Savone. The Pope was allowed to see and communicate only with his gaolers ; he was deprived of paper, pencils, ink, and pens. It is also known that the Pope, by way of legitimate reprisals, was refusing to institute twenty-two bishops appointed by the Emperor, and forbidding diocesan chapters to admit those bishops, even as simple capitulary vicars.

The storm which was threatening in those quarters soon broke out over M. Portalis's head.

His crime was being aware of what everybody knew—that there existed a papal bull, forbidding the Chapter of Paris to receive Cardinal Maury, and to have also known what could be readily guessed—that the papal bull was in the hands of the Abbé d'Astros, first capitulary vicar. As Directeur Général de l'Imprimerie et de la Librairie, M. Portalis had nothing to do with finding out and prosecuting a written document which it was not intended to print ; but, seeing that he was the near relation of the Abbé d'Astros, he became the scapegoat, and upon him fell the imperial wrath.

The Emperor's anger manifested itself on the 2nd or 3rd of January, 1811. It was not unforeseen. Everybody expected it, and the Conseil d'État was the place

appointed for its display ; on meeting, everybody was, therefore, whispering to his neighbour, and merely pretending to be discussing. The Emperor came in at the usual hour. I will not say that he looked severe, but rather that he put on a mask of severity ; everything was affected in the scene which he had prepared.

He sat down, took his glasses in his fingers and held them in the direction of M. Portalis. After this, he selected, from the order of the day, the item upon which he opened the debate, putting the questions himself in order to be answered.

Having several times renewed the same tactics, like a cat who watches a mouse before clawing it, he turned to the Arch-Chancellor, and asked him whether M. Portalis was present. The latter having bowed affirmatively, the Emperor, so to speak, pounced upon his victim, after the manner of a bird of prey, and shook it, as it were, for more than an hour and a half, without giving it time either to answer or yet to breathe. At length, having exhausted his vocabulary of invective, and being out of breath, he ended with the following crushing apostrophe :

‘Leave my council, that I may never see you again ; go forty leagues away from Paris.’

Poor M. Portalis, who had had no opportunity to

speak a word, lost no time in obeying. He left hurriedly, forgetting, on his little desk, a half-opened notebook and his hat.

During all the time of the imperial speech, the whole council remained silent and awe-stricken. Two of its members, however, and I state it to their credit, were courageous enough—for it needed courage to do so—to interfere in that fable of the wolf and the lamb. These were M. Pasquier and M. Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely.

Had anyone been in the wrong, M. Pasquier, recently appointed Prefect of Police, should have been the only guilty party; he was not afraid of reminding his master of it. M. Regnault, as was his wont, went to the rescue of the weak, through sheer spirit of justice and kindness of nature.

M. Pasquier, with whom I was already acquainted (he had most obligingly, at the time of my mission in the Sarthe Department, offered me a letter of introduction to his brother, who was Sub-prefect at La Flèche), was then in the flower of his age. Having been born in 1767, he was about forty-four years old. Being heir to a name famous on the bench, and of which he showed himself worthy in every respect, he entered Parliament at the time when the turbulence of the Abbé

Sabathier and of M. d'Esprémesnil was the foreboding of the storms of the Revolution ; but he had no seat in the Assemblée Constituante or in the Assemblée Législative. Having been suspected during the Terror, he only escaped through the discreet protection of Levasseur (from the Sarthe Department), a tolerably well-known *conventionnel* and surgeon of his family ; and though he was finally arrested, that was late enough to enable him to regain his liberty on the 9th of Thermidor. He often told me that, during those frightful times, he had willingly, and at the same time in spite of himself, witnessed the execution of Louis XVI.

‘ I occupied,’ he said, ‘ an humble residence situate at the end of the boulevard, close to the spot now occupied by the Church of the Madeleine. I saw the fatal tumbril slowly advancing ; I heard the vociferations of the mob which followed it. There was a vague rumour that, before the execution, an attempt would be made to rescue the august victim. I did not believe it, but, at all hazards, I left my house and mixed with the crowd. Having once entered the human stream, I found it impossible to get away. I was first pushed along, and then carried somehow quite close to the scaffold, which had been erected at the entrance of the Champs Élysées. I neither heard the words spoken by

the King, nor his conversation with the Abbé Edgeworth; but, whilst gazing on the crowd which was uttering ferocious yells, I fancied that the faces bore the stamp of terror a great deal more than that of fury. When the executioner held aloft the gory head, all that crowd, extending from the river to the Garde Meuble, shouted with one voice, “Vive la Nation!” and dispersed in every direction as fast as it could. A few minutes afterwards, the executioner and his assistants were the only occupiers of the square.’

Having remained away from public affairs under the Convention and under the Directory, M. Pasquier was on the point of entering into the Conseil d’État, during the last year of the Consulate, when the murder of the Duc d’Enghien led him to give up his intention. Some years after, he was appointed Maître des Requêtes, and owing to his name and to his personal merit, he, like M. Molé, soon rose to the rank of Conseiller d’État; the Emperor having had the happy thought of modifying the character of the Prefecture of Police, and of making it quite a political—a municipal—institution, he insisted upon entrusting M. Pasquier with the duty of carrying out that reform. And, indeed, he could not have made a better choice.

M. Regnault was older than M. Pasquier, and, like

him, he was kind and obliging to me. Belonging to a poor family whose members were honourably known as petty magistrates, he had been brought up in the house of President Saint-Fargeau, with the notorious Michel Lepeletier. When a barrister, he became a member of the Assemblée Constituante; and although he sat on the Liberal side of that House, he did not participate in its excesses. On the 10th of August he was amongst the defenders of the King; on the 13th of Vendémiaire he sided with the adversaries of the Convention. Circumstances having, during the campaign of Italy and at the outset of the expedition to Egypt, brought him in contact with General Bonaparte, he actively supported the 18th of Brumaire. Having entered the Conseil d'État, his rare aptitudes, varied knowledge, and facility as an orator rapidly carried him to the post of head of the department of the Interior and secured his appointment as Secretary of State to the imperial family. The Emperor, who loved and appreciated him highly, would doubtless have appointed him Minister of the Interior, had he not regarded with mistrust the society frequented by M. Regnault.

Of that society I only knew the *esoteric* part, if I may use the word; that which used to meet at the evenings of Madame Regnault, a lady of good birth,

handsome, elegant, and highly esteemed at Court. That society was mixed, and used to bring together, on a footing of familiarity, public and business men, men of the world and literary men, fashionable ladies such as Madame Regnault herself, and ladies of wit like Madame Hamelin and Madame Gay ; but, as a very modern writer maliciously puts it, ‘more men than husbands were to be seen there.’

Like all my colleagues of the Conseil d’État, I used to visit that house. I used also to attend the parties given by Madame Hamelin and by Madame Gay, both of which, I may say so without fear of exaggeration, were frequented by a society similar in every respect to that one met at Madame Regnault’s. At the house of the latter I generally used to meet with many men fully deserving to be known, amongst others, Népomucène Lemercier, with whom I since became intimate. His character was one of the most honourable of the time, and his mind one of the most original.

III.

1811.

I SPENT the first months of 1811 in Paris, working a little, though less than I could have wished ; studying a little, though less than I ought to have done ; devoting myself with no energy to the distractions of official and social life, though preferring the intercourse of everyday life in the same houses and with the same persons.

I generally finished my evenings at the houses of Madame de la Grange and Madame Esménard.

Madame de la Grange was a very old lady, an intimate friend of Madame de Menou, the mother-in-law of one of my sisters, and I had been introduced to her house when first I entered society. I was almost like one of her family, which in itself was very numerous.

Her eldest son was a general of division, and had lost his right arm at the battle of Essling. He had married the widow of the unfortunate Suleau, one of

the victims of the massacre of the 10th of August, and her father was a well-known painter in his day. She was beautiful, amiable, and kind. The course of events, and the difference of our political opinions, separated us, to my regret, under the Restoration.

Madame de la Grange's second son was a colonel. He married a daughter of the Prince de Beauvau, and to me he entrusted the mission of soliciting her hand for him in marriage.

Her third son, at that time aide-de-camp to the Prince of Neuchâtel, afterwards became general of division. He is now a senator.

Her fourth son, who had risen to the rank of colonel, resigned his commission to become Secretary of Embassy, and married at Vienna.

Madame de la Grange had also a daughter, a lady of very amiable disposition, and of a highly-cultured mind; she was at that time maid-of-honour to the Queen of Naples. She married Colonel Carrière, a good friend of mine.

When a young man I had been introduced to Madame Esménard by her husband, whom I had frequently met in literary circles; he was a man of education, and possessed a real talent for poetry. Though not exactly brilliant, he had a refined mind.

I do not know to what family Madame Esménard belonged; at any rate, she was a lady of lofty character, even temper, well-balanced mind, and a desirable acquaintance. She had, at that time, three very young daughters, the youngest of whom is now a canoness in Bavaria. She used to receive a rather limited circle of wits and literati. At her house I became acquainted with M. de Rossel, the travelling companion of d'Entrecasteaux. I may here mention that at her house it was that I met also a person who, under the name of General Dubourg, which I fancy was only assumed, played since almost a leading part in the revolution of July.

My stay in Paris and my state of expectancy would have been fairly pleasant, if I had had nothing to think about besides my own personal enjoyment, but I saw my colleagues being promoted one after another, without there being any thought of me, although I was generally spoken of in favourable terms. However, one evening, on entering M. de Bassano's drawing-room, where I was received as a special favour, the master of the house came up to me in a manner at the same time embarrassed and haughty, and informed me that that very morning I had been appointed as one of a batch of *auditeurs* who were to accompany Baron Dudon, lately

appointed Maitre des Requêtes, to the Northern Army in Spain ; he then left me without waiting for my reply.

I was thunderstruck. It was not what might exactly be termed a disgrace—my position could not have warranted such an expression upon my lips—yet I was greatly mortified.

My companions in exile were nearly all my juniors ; as for our chief, he was our equal but a day before. A mission to Spain was generally disliked, because of the odious way in which things were carried on there, and of the dangers attending it ; besides which, that mission being left to its evil fate in the Emperor's mind, once sent out there, no return could be expected, no promotion hoped for.

On returning home I found the letter of appointment waiting for me, and I spent the night in considering what line of action I should take.

I could protest, I could plead my seniority and my services ; but I was in a state of irritation, and the idea of asking anything for myself or of allowing anything to be asked for me, I rejected.

I could certainly send in my resignation, but owing to the difficulties and dangers attending the mission, I was afraid that my motives might be misinterpreted.

After weighing all considerations, I decided that it

would be more dignified and prudent to start at once, without even waiting for the order, without taking leave of my superiors, without any complaint, to suffer personally so far as I thought necessary in order to protect my reputation, and then to send in my resignation if justice were persistently denied me.

I hastened my preparations without saying a word, and started without seeing either M. de Bassano, the High Chancellor, M. Molé, or even M. Dudon again. I merely stopped at Ormes to say good-bye to my mother, and left as soon as I heard of M. Dudon's departure for our common destination.

On my passage through Bordeaux, I was present at the theatre the day when, between the two pieces, the birth of the King of Rome was announced; and I noticed, not without a certain amount of malicious satisfaction, that, in spite of the efforts and precautions taken by the Prefecture, the event was very coldly received, only arousing a very meagre enthusiasm. My own personal feelings were quite in harmony with those evinced by the generality of the audience.

Having arrived at Bayonne, I learnt that M. Dudon had already started, taking an escort with him at every stage. Having no right to demand so much, I was obliged to wait until the next convoy should be formed.

I remained at Bayonne about a fortnight. My companions in exile having arrived in the meantime, we made each other's acquaintance.

The most distinguished amongst them was Pépin de Bellisle. He was a man of a rare mind and a noble heart. As a matter of fact, he was much more to be pitied, and had been treated a great deal more scurvily than I. His elder brother, who was also an *auditeur*, had been sawn between two planks at Santarem, near Lisbon. It was surely more than harsh not to have remembered that fact when drawing up the list of young men to be sent on such a pleasant excursion.

After him came Frochot, the only son of the Prefect of Paris, a young man of great promise, endowed with brilliant qualities and noble aspirations, though rather a spoilt child, quick to take offence, and of a diffident disposition.

I grew intimate with both of them, and was on friendly terms with all. O'Donnell, the favourite pupil of my cousin, Alexandre de Lamech; Dutilleul, brother-in-law to M. Mollien, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Duval de Beaulieu, a young Belgian, who has since then played a most honourable part in the affairs of his country; Fargues, the son of the senator of that name; Saint-Chamans, brother of the General

so well known for his noble conduct during the revolution of July—they all, from the very first, displayed towards me a friendliness which I returned, and which ever after remained unchanged.

Montléar was only with us for a very short period; he had contracted a left-handed marriage with the Princess of Carignan, mother of the future King of Sardinia, and this marriage having been made public, he was speedily recalled.

The time having come to despatch a convoy, for which an escort was generally provided at each stage, we set off on horseback at a slow pace, following a long train of carriages, and naturally disputing with the other persons composing the convoy the miserable sleeping accommodation offered by a country already ruined by a war of five years' duration.

All I will say of the aspect of the country is that the province of Biscay appeared to me very fertile, whereas the two Castiles looked very barren; but, it being strictly forbidden us to leave the road hemmed in by our escort, lest we should be carried off by the insurgents and subjected to torture, I could not see much, even supposing that anything remained to be seen, amid the ruins of so many burnt villages. We travelled for about a fortnight, including a stay of twenty-four

hours at Vittoria and another of like duration at Burgos. At last we reached Valladolid, where Marshal Bessières had established his headquarters. M. Dudon was already there waiting for us.

Marshal Bessières, who was killed later (1813) at the battle of Lützen, was tall, thin, and bony, and stooped a little. He used to powder his hair, and wore it flat; his manner was cold and polite. Like all military men, he did not look on the civil assistants sent to him with a particularly favourable eye, and preferred his commissaries of war; he, however, received us tolerably well.

M. Dudon, who was then thirty-five years old at the outside, belonged to a good family of the Parliament of Bordeaux. He had begun his career as *substitut* in the magistracy, and as *auditeur* in the Conseil d'État. Two misfortunes of a different kind had, however, befallen him in the performance of his duties. Speaking during the course of a celebrated divorce suit, he had given his decree in favour of the woman, and had married her later on, she being older and richer than he was. In 1806, having, as *auditeur*, been entrusted with the despatch-box, he lost it on his way, and being afraid to present himself at headquarters empty-handed, he returned to Paris in order to acquaint the High

Chancellor, a well-wisher of his, with his misfortune.

These two events had ruined his reputation, the former as a magistrate, the latter in the Conseil d'État ; so that after seven or eight years of public services his position had not improved. It was only with great difficulty, and because of his willingness to accept a post which everyone else declined, that he secured his appointment as Maître des Requêtes. He was, for all that, a cultivated, intelligent, active, and energetic man, with whom intercourse was most agreeable. I am unable to state whether he deserved all that was said about him later on, and in very different circumstances ; but during the time I served under him I can certainly testify to the integrity of his administration.

The very day after our arrival, he settled with Marshal Bessières as to how the vacant posts were to be distributed amongst us.

The territory occupied by the Army of the North was divided into five Governments, which bore the numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

The third extended its jurisdiction over the province of Navarre ;

The fourth, over the provinces of Biscay, of Alava, of Guipuscoa, and of Santander ;

The fifth, over the provinces of Burgos and of Soria ;

The sixth, over the provinces of Valencia, of Valladolid, of Leon, of Toro, and of Zamora ;

The seventh comprised the provinces of Salamanca and of Ciudad Rodrigo.

If I am not mistaken, this thorough dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy was destined to become, *in petto imperiale*, an integral part of the French monarchy, and it was proposed to divide it soon into departments.

For this reason a decree of January 15th, 1811, which was fully explained in a series of minute instructions, had appointed, under the orders of Marshal Bessières, a Commissary-General, assisted by an unlimited number of *auditeurs*, as the head of the five Governments, and had given him the upper hand over the military administration itself. The five Governments were all equally subjected (on paper, at least) to the procedure of the French Administration.

The following divisions of territory were allotted to us :

Pépin de Bellisle was sent as Commissary to Santander ;

O'Donnell, to Vittoria ;
Fargues, to Burgos, where he was later on replaced
by Feutrier ;
Patry, into Asturia ;
Saint-Chamans, to Palencia ;
Mahé de Villeneuve, to Leon ;
Gaultier, to Soria ;
Gossuin, to Toro.

Those whose names follow remained at Valladolid,
viz. :

Duval de Beaulieu, as Commissary ;
I, as Secretary-General ;
Dutilleul, as Chef de la Comptabilité, under the
orders of his brother, at that time Receveur-
Général ;
Frochot, as Attaché to the Commissariat-General.
M. Bessières, being a relation of the Marshal, re-
tained the Commissariatship of Navarre.

The town having been abandoned by its principal
inhabitants, lodgings were plentiful in Valladolid. I at
first took up my quarters in very roomy, decent, and
cheap apartments situate in the chief square of the

town; but I did not occupy them long. I had only been there two days, when, on getting up and looking from the window, the first thing that met my sight was a wretched priest who was being strangled in the Spanish fashion. He was made to sit on a chair, and choked by means of a cord which was passed round his neck and tightened by means of a wooden instrument. There were eight others at the foot of the scaffold, all reciting their prayers and waiting their turn. I started back in horror, and the very same day I removed elsewhere.

After that Frochot and I went to live in a house which was entirely empty; but we had the door and the windows repaired. We had fireplaces built, and we put in sufficient furniture, so that the owners, when they returned, must certainly have found it in a far better state than when they left it.

There was no society to frequent at Valladolid; no house was opened to us; there was no theatre, and no one to be seen in the public places. We Frenchmen lived among ourselves. Luckily the staff of the Marshal consisted of men of eminence, several of whom I knew. General Cæsar Delaville, a Piedmontese, a man of a cultivated mind and of very high character; Adrien d'Astorg; Auguste de Forbin, who was known

as a successful painter and man of the world. At the time I am speaking of, he was on duty with the Army of Portugal.

The Marshal had always been fond of being surrounded by men of position, and he always treated them with politeness, but without ever losing sight of his dignity. M. de Montrond told me that one day, when dining with him at Antwerp, he asked him to allow one of his orderly officers to sit at the end of the table. That officer was the Duke de la Force, who had lost everything he possessed except his sword.

All our amusements consisted in a few excursions in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, when the Governor, General Kellermann, allowed it, which he did but seldom, and with good reason ; in a few rides on the ramparts ; and, lastly, in a few walks along the banks of the Douro, inside the town itself. And even that pleasure had its dangers, for one evening, whilst lying on the grass, we suddenly heard bullets whistling about our ears, which proceeded from a small body of insurgents who were firing on us from the opposite bank of the river.

As for our work, it was excessive, but it had nothing attractive in it. We were in one of the least hardly-used districts of Spain, at some distance from the

theatre of war. The territory was placed under a mixed Government, where the harshness of a military administration was softened by the co-operation and the control of a civil administration; and, with the secret design of annexing it to France, our chiefs were instructed to deal gently with it. Marshal Bessières was a cold, without being a hard, man, and severe without being cruel. M. Dudon and all of us, his assistants, made it a point of honour to protect the inhabitants as far as we possibly could, and to secure for them, as far as it depended on us, the guarantees which were part and parcel of the French legal administration. But, however much we might try, it was, nevertheless, almost impossible for us to escape the terrible necessities of the time and the place.

I have opened at haphazard the register of Marshal Bessières' orders from April 11th, the date of our arrival, to July 15th, the date of our departure—of which register I have kept a copy—and I find, mixed up together, the following minutes :

‘ 1. Seeing that the presence of brigands in the partidos of Cevica and Peñafiel is favoured by the greater part of the inhabitants;

‘ An extraordinary contribution of 400,000 reals on

the partido of Cevica del Torre, in the province of Palencia, and of 300,000 reals on Peñafiel, in the province of Valladolid, shall be levied.

‘ These contributions are to be paid without delay.

‘ 2. Seeing that the refusal of the inhabitants of Valladolid to furnish provisions, which we ordered in our requisition of March 26th, threatens the safety of the army ;

‘ That this refusal is not occasioned by the scarcity of grain, but by the ill-will of the inhabitants ;

‘ That under such circumstances it becomes necessary to make those responsible who, by their wealth, their position, and the esteem in which they are held amongst the common people, have the most influence on their mind ;

‘ An extraordinary contribution of a million of reals is levied on the town of Valladolid.

‘ This contribution is to be distributed as follows : 500,000 reals on trade ; 250,000 reals on the clergy ; 250,000 reals on the inhabitants. These sums are to be paid within five days of this present decision.

‘ The Commissary-General will give to us a list of fifty persons taken from amongst the most well-to-do of each class, who shall be obliged to pay the contribution, *sauf leur recours contre qui il appartiendra*, under

the penalty of being forced by means of military execution.'

Another order of the 27th follows, which draws up the list of the fifty :

' 3. Seeing the different reports as to the conduct of the clergy of the province of Alava ;

' All the canons of the Cathedral of Vittoria, all the ex-monks residing in the province of Alava, and all ecclesiastics whose conduct does not fully guarantee the fidelity of their principles and their attachment to the Government, are to be arrested at once.

' 4. Seeing that the merciful measures by which we hoped to bring the people to submission have only resulted in increasing the number of insurgents and of partisans ;

' A list is to be drawn up under the care of the municipalities of the towns, and of the justices in the villages, of all those persons who have left their domiciles, and who do not live in the places occupied by the French troops.

' All these persons shall be obliged to return within a month ; and when that term is over they shall be supposed to form part of the bands of insurgents, and their goods shall be confiscated, and all persons of whom they are creditors in whatever respect, are for-

bidden to pay anything except into the hands of the administrators of the national revenue.

‘The fathers, mothers, brothers, children, nephews of these individuals are declared responsible, either in property or in person, for every act of brigandage committed by the insurgents.

‘If any inhabitant is carried off from his domicile, three of the nearest relations of a brigand are to be arrested at once as hostages. If that individual is put to death by the insurgents, the hostages are to be shot at once without any further formalities.

‘Every person who shall absent himself from his district for more than three days, from the date of the publication of the present order, without permission, shall be regarded as having gone over to the brigands ; his property shall be confiscated and sold within three months, and all his relations indicated in Article 3 shall be arrested.

‘No inhabitant will any longer be allowed to leave his district without being provided with a passport, which will be given him for a limited period. This passport will only be given on the attestation of two persons domiciled in the district, who shall guarantee that at the expiration of the term mentioned in the passport the bearer of it shall return to his district, or

shall justify himself by residing in some place occupied by the French army. In the opposite case the two guarantors shall be arrested and taken to prison.

‘Domiciliary searches will be made according to the orders of *commandants de place* at such periods as they shall think fit, and any person not provided with *une carte de sûreté* will be arrested at once.

‘Those also will be arrested who harbour any individual who neither has a passport nor *une carte de sûreté*.

‘Anyone convicted of having held any communication with the brigands shall suffer the punishment of death.

‘The different districts are responsible for any damage inflicted on national property, and also for any sums of money, grain or animals, provisions or anything else which belongs to the State, which may have been carried off by the brigands without the inhabitants offering resistance.

‘The district where any damage shall have taken place, or from where anything shall have been carried off, shall be bound to make good the value of the loss at once ; and it will be reimbursed by an extraordinary contribution to be levied only on the fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and children of those who have taken flight, or of brigands.

‘Should such persons refuse to pay the sum which is due from them on the assessment, their goods shall be sold at the suit of the Commissary of the province without any necessity for a judgment or of any judicial act.

‘5. Considering the report which we have received as to the conduct of the inhabitants of the district of Moralès, in the province of Zamora, and of that of the same name in the province of Toro, and which show that they have not conformed to the dispositions of our order of the day of June 11, 1811, in which we enjoined on the inhabitants to inform the commandants of French garrisons and troops when bands of brigands were on their territory, under pain of exemplary punishment :

‘An extraordinary contribution of 120,000 reals shall be levied on the district of Moralès, in the province of Zamora, and of 100,000 reals on the district of Moralès, in the province of Toro.

‘The *curés* of these districts are to be arrested and taken to prison until they can be led out of the country.

‘Ten hostages will be taken from amongst the richest inhabitants of these districts, and they will be retained until the whole contribution is paid up.

‘ If within five days of the notification of this order the extraordinary contribution is not paid, the districts will be dealt with summarily.’

When, after the lapse of forty-six years, I read again these terrible words, in which one would rather see the language of a terrorist in Vendée than that of a marshal of France, speaking in the name of the author of the Code Civil and of the Concordat, I cannot repress a feeling of deep regret and humiliation. I certainly had no hand in these acts ; I had no voice in the matter ; and my name, placed below that of the Marshal, only appeared there as a matter of form, just like the name of some clerk at the bottom of some warrant with which he has nothing to do. Nevertheless, I am fully sensible of the fact that I ought to have risked everything rather than to have lent myself to it ; and I may think myself very lucky that none of those orders which were printed and fixed to the walls of Valladolid fell into the hands of the journalists whilst I was minister. It would have been difficult to have explained them, and party spirit would have made good use of them.

A short time after we were regularly installed, Marshal Bessières left us with a portion of his army to go to the aid of Marshal Massena, who was again

entering Spain after his disastrous campaign in Portugal, and who was closely pressed by the Duke of Wellington. The two Marshals between them, as everybody knows, lost the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro, and ours returned to us very much dissatisfied with his colleague, who, for his part, was just as much so with him.

Marshal Massena having been recalled, we saw him pass through Valladolid with the remains of his staff in rather a pitiable plight, accompanied by the wretched mistress he had dragged with him all through his campaign. He seemed to me very old, very broken, and almost decrepit, although he was little more than sixty years of age. It certainly was a miserable and ridiculous sight.

I think, without venturing to assert it, that it was during the short period that elapsed between the return of Marshal Bessières and his departure for France, where he went to assume again the command of the cavalry of the Guard, that King Joseph arrived. That Prince had obtained from the universal lord the permission to be present at the baptism of the King of Rome, and to take that occasion to plead the cause of his subjects. I am only saying what was said then.

As a matter of fact, it is well known that at that

time it was his theme—or, if one likes it better, his hobby—to maintain that in Spain all the difficulties sprang from the presence of French troops, from the exactions of their commanders, the number and the harshness of the military executions; that beloved, nay, adored as he was by the Spaniards, he would reign peacefully and gloriously, if only he were relieved of these mischievous allies.

M. Thiers has very rightly judged what amount of truth there may be under this bragging; but the truth is, that all the Spaniards who either had no arms, or had arms no longer in their hands, speculated on the vanity of their sham king in this respect, being quite certain that if they had only him to deal with they would soon get rid of him.

Everybody, therefore, was very curious to know what he brought back with him from Paris, and how far his eloquence, assisted by the need the Emperor might have of his Spanish veterans to conquer Russia and to drive the English out of India, might have worked. Therefore, we were very much astonished to see, at a levée which Joseph held at Valladolid, crowds of Spaniards altogether unknown to us, and sprung as it were from the ground, coming to kiss his hand. The palace of the Government was full of them, and

the King seemed delighted at it. Less foolish than he was, his visitors, after having heard him, withdrew sad and discomfited, and we never heard anything more of them. Nothing was more dull and slow than the state dinner which the Spanish Commissary, Roxa, gave us in honour of the happy return of his Majesty.

Towards the end of July, General Dorsenne, one of the generals of the Young Guard, two divisions of which, I believe, figured in our army, came to replace Marshal Bessières. He was rather young and handsome, or, if one prefers the word, an insipidly good-looking soldier, severe and haughty, *d'un esprit court*, but upright and devoted to his duties. Under his administration the acts to which I alluded just now became more frequent, and their harshness increased from day to day.

The decree relating to the supreme police measures against the relatives of insurgents was published anew, embellished with clauses and provisions which might perhaps have inspired the National Convention with some scruples in its better moments; amongst others, the provision which dissolved marriages contracted between parties whose names appeared on the fatal lists.

During the latter months of 1811, General Dorsenne

and the Commissary-General visited nearly every part of the territory occupied by the Army of the North.

They then lived amicably together. I accompanied General Dorsenne as Secretary-General; Frochot accompanied M. Dudon, and we travelled together in a comfortable cabriolet, drawn by two excellent mules.

We went through the provinces of Medina del Rioseco and of Palencia, a very fertile but quite flat country, without either water or woods, and without a trace of verdure, and thus we reached the kingdom of Léon. There the aspect was very different. It is the theatre of the Diana of Monte Mayor. The plains of Léon are watered by the Ezla and by a great number of streams which descend from the mountains of Asturia and Galicia. Interspersed by high ground and valleys, intersected by avenues which line the streams, they present a very charming and varied scene.

Our excursion extended as far as the entrance to the gorges of Asturia; but we did not go through them, as they are almost inaccessible except on horseback. Besides that, we should have had to run the risk of being fired at by the insurgents from under cover, and of losing men uselessly. We might even have been hemmed in, and then compelled to have forced our way out again.

These gorges of Asturia remind me of the first scenes of 'Gil Blas,' though I really do not know why, since 'Gil Blas' is a romance, and Lesage was never in Spain. When from the heights of the Castle of Edinburgh one takes in at one glance the spots where Walter Scott has fixed the scenes of his principal works of fiction, there at least all is not fictitious, for the author is drawing according to nature. Had Lesage pictured it to himself or copied the reality at second hand, or did my memory mislead me? I do not know, but what is certain is, that learned Spaniards claim the original right to 'Gil Blas'—a claim which, as far as its author is concerned, is worth more than all praises.

From the foot of the mountains of the Asturias we went to Astorga, a small fortified town which closes the entrance into Galicia. Taken and retaken, this unhappy place, with its narrow, crooked, and smoky streets, presented a sorrowful sight. Within it was little better than a heap of ruins, but the fortifications had been repaired with some care.

From Astorga we descended to Benvento, following the course of the Ezla, which falls into the Douro near that town; and on the banks of that river the whole troop that accompanied the General-in-Chief, and he himself first of all, was greeted by a volley from the

other side. A few voltigeurs were sent after the insurgents, but without overtaking them. No one was wounded, however.

We followed the course of the Douro from Benvento to Zamora, a small town of about 10,000 inhabitants, which is on the extreme frontier between Spain and Portugal, and which contains nothing remarkable except a palace of the Cid, which is in ruins. From this spot, still descending the river, we reached Toro, another little town of about the same size, which had likewise nothing remarkable in itself, but the name of which is historical. There were promulgated, in 1505, the famous laws of Toro, which form the basis of Spanish legislation.

Returning to Valladolid, we stopped at Simancas, a small town, where are kept, in a strong castle, the archives of the Spanish monarchy—secret archives if ever there were any, at least till the French invasion. But at the period of which I am speaking it was given up to subordinates, and was in a reduced state of confusion and almost of pillage.

M. Dudon busied himself, during the few hours which he spent in visiting them, in reorganizing the *service de conservation*, and gave strict orders that no one should be admitted except by express permission of the

King or of the French administration ; and thus he took care of what was most needful for the moment.

As for me, I employed my few hours in hunting amongst the archives, and suddenly I came on a little dirty and torn manuscript in a very bad state, which had this title : ‘ Breves memorias de las vidas y tragicas muertes de don Carlos, principe de Asturias, hijo de Felipe II., rey de España, y doña Isabel de Valois, princesa de Francia, muger de dicho Felipe II.’

I thought I had indeed found a treasure. Such a manuscript in such a place, the account of such an event, apparently just as it had happened, since pains had been taken to bury it in the sacred archives of the iniquities of the monarchy. What a stroke of luck ! At last I was about to find the answer to this mysterious and sad enigma. But the time was short. General Dorsenne, who cared very little about such trifles, gave orders to mount, and it was as much as anyone’s life was worth to be fifty yards behind. I settled the matter with the custodian, who was very glad to be *remis sur pied*, and who, moreover, could refuse us nothing. He promised to have the manuscript copied, and to send it to me to Valladolid.

He kept his promise ; but nothing is done quickly in Spain, so it only reached me just as I was setting

out for France, and was sent to my address in the modest amount of luggage which I left behind me. But then, again, nothing goes quickly in Spain, and so I did not receive my luggage till the moment when I was starting to continue my official pilgrimages. I had no time to decipher a manuscript in very bad Spanish handwriting. I carefully put it away, and forgot all about it for three years, two-thirds of which I spent out of France.

I thought no more of it till 1814, after the Restoration. One evening, happening to be in the *salon* of the Duchess d'Abrantès, who *préludait* then at the historiographical part of her time by writing small novels, she confided to us (there were about half a dozen young men and young women present) that she wished to write a novel about Don Carlos.

When she said this, I remembered my precious manuscript. I related how I became possessed of it, and was asked to go and fetch it at once. I did so, and, knowing exactly where I had put it, I brought it back in triumph. I tried to translate it verbally on the spot, as well as possible, to the delighted company; but what was the general surprise and my own confusion at finding that it was nothing but a Spanish version of the novel of 'Saint-Real.' I leave my

readers to judge of the shouts of laughter this caused. I was most mercilessly made fun of, and I made my excuses with a good grace, as I do now that I am telling the matter. But the question is, How was it possible for the novel of 'Saint-Real' to have found a place in the State archives of Spain? It is a matter which I cannot undertake to explain. I can only limit myself to offering the communication of the said manuscript to anyone who may be curious about the matter.

Our second *tournée*, which took us directly by the road to France from Valladolid to Pampeluna, was much shorter and much less varied than the first, and was also not so pleasant. The friendly relations that had existed between the General-in-Chief and the Commissary-General had ceased for some time, and their mutual fault-finding came to a head at Briviesca. The altercation was very violent, so much so, indeed, that General Dorsenne that very evening sent an aide-de-camp to Paris to ask for the recall of M. Dudon, which, however, he did not obtain: and our two chiefs did not meet any more, communicating with each other after that only by letter or by messenger.

As Secretary-General I was necessarily that medium. On every question of any importance M. Dudon ad-

dressed a very well-written and clear minute to the General-in-Chief. It was my business to explain it to him, for he could not understand it himself, and his opponent cunningly wished to make him feel it. By this means matters went on very much as formerly, and I remained in the fairly good graces of both authorities.

We did not remain in Navarre for more than a week. The country appeared charming to me—well-wooded, verdant, hilly, bounded on one side by the Ebro, on the other by the Bidassoa. Its aspect exactly resembles that of the other side of the Pyrenees; I have often thought of this since in the three journeys which I have taken since to Cauterets and to Eaux-Bonnes. The town of Pampeluna itself is interesting and original, and, so to speak, picturesque like the surrounding country. It wears altogether the look of another age, and when, on a fine night in summer, it, according to the singularly happy expression of Victor Hugo, *ferme sa ceinture de tours*, it carries back the fancy far from the period in which we are living.

When I visited the prison of Pampeluna, first with the General-in-Chief and later with the Commissary-General, I saw our law of suspects and of hostages in full force. There might be seen, crowded together

pell-mell in the most noisome holes, the fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, and children of those whom we called brigands, because they resisted the paternal sceptre of the King Joseph, and of taxpayers who refused to obey our exactions. These wretched people shed copious tears and trembled in every limb when they saw us, and not without reason, for there was a report current amongst them that the French generals did not feel the smallest scruple in hanging any of them by way of a good example. A General Abbé whom I never knew, and who did not figure in our army, was quoted as an instance of this. I do not believe, if he exists, that he ever did any of the things which are laid to his charge. Mutual calumnies were very frequent in Spain at that period ; but one must also allow that everything was possible there, and that everything was excused there on either side, if it can be accepted as an excuse, by the atrocity of the reprisals.

After our return to Valladolid, we spent the end of the year very quietly there.

We had frequent communication with France, and the Emperor, on the eve of his departure for the Russian campaign, sent officer after officer to all points of the peninsula.

Most of these officers were really sent on service ; others, however, were sometimes sent for quite other reasons. It was a sort of ostracism inflicted on their gallants, when the intrigues of the virtuous Princesses of the blood imperial and of the great ladies of the Court made stir enough to shock the freshly awakened modesty of our newly-married crowned head.

Amongst the number of these unconverted penitents was one of my friends, Jules de Canonville, aide-de-camp to the Prince of Neuchatel, and brother of my colleague of *la section de guerre*. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that during my exile in Spain he underwent this disciplinary peregrination four times. When, early in the morning, I heard a whip cracked in the yard of our modest lodgings, I always expected to see him come in. I had a bed got ready for him, so that he might get a few hours' rest, and a good breakfast, so that he might recruit his strength, and then I listened to his confidences. He told me of all the quarrels of the capitals ; and, like the leper of M. de Maistre, when the children called out to him as they passed by the foot of his prison, ' Good-day, leper,' it rather amused me.

I was not over-dull at times, as I had some resources. If the university of Valladolid was deserted,

it yet had a very good library. There were to be found not only the Spanish but also the Greek and Roman classics, and nearly all the best French works, not only of the seventeenth but also of the eighteenth century. They willingly lent me all the books I wished to borrow. Now, as it happened, the very year before I had regularly set to work at my studies again. By this I mean the unenforced and disinterested pleasure of learning for the sake of learning, of knowing for the sake of knowing, of exercising one's mind with no other object but to maintain and strengthen its activity.

From an early age I had had a great taste for this. Disappointment and business had rather deadened the feeling, but it had come upon me again as strongly as ever, and arose from a very small circumstance, from which, however, dates an epoch in my life. When I was starting for Croatia, I bought an incomplete copy, which I still have, of the miscellaneous works of Gibbon. During my journey I looked through the third volume of it, called 'Extraits raisonnés de mes Lectures.' Gibbon, in his retirement at Lausanne, whilst putting the finishing-touches to his great work, every evening entered in a book what he had studied during the day, and the reflections which his readings

suggested to him. This diary enchanted me. I was delighted with this sample of a calm and quiet life, which was only taken up with intellectual work. I got it into my head that nothing could be better or more agreeable, and I made it the aim of my existence, proposing to myself always to keep it before my eyes. As soon as I arrived at Pétrinia, I began a diary which I called, like Gibbon's diary, '*Extraits raisonnés de mes Lectures*;' and I went on with it during all my stay both in Algeria and in Spain. It will be found amongst my papers; and, if the course of events soon forced me to interrupt it, it has in no way changed the current of my thoughts or of my inclinations.

The taste remained, and I owe it much, for I owe to it the happiest moments of my life after those which I have devoted to domestic affection. I owe to it the constant desire for retirement when I have been engaged in public affairs, and the fear of being obliged to re-enter public life each time I have left it. If my conduct on the whole has brought me some consideration, this attraction which study had for me deserves all the honour. Personally I have nothing to do with it.

IV.

1812.

THE year 1812 opened on us under unfavourable auspices. The town of Ciudad Rodrigo, which the Spaniards justly regard as the key of Portugal, and the Portuguese, with as much reason, as the key of Spain, was attacked by the Duke of Wellington on January 8th, and capitulated on the 20th of that month.

General Dorsenne was almost entrusted with its defence. The blame was laid on him. He was reproached for not having revictualled the garrison, for having confided the command to an officer who was unfit for the post, and for not having marched to its assistance soon enough.

I do not know what truth there is in the matter, but it is certain that General Dorsenne was recalled and replaced by General Caffarelli. But as General Dorsenne was in command of a division of the Young Guard, which was ready to start on the expedition to

Russia, very probably that was the real reason for his recall. His last order was dated December 19, 1811.

Master of Ciudad Rodrigo, the Duke of Wellington menaced the line of communication between Bayonne and the Army of Portugal. To cover it, Marshal Marmont, the successor of Marshal Masséna, after having fortified Salamanca as well as he was able, caused his army to occupy the province of Valladolid, and fixed his headquarters in that town.

The civil establishment to which I belonged was thus cut in two, and the Commissary-General found that he depended on two Generals-in-Chief.

The first order of Marshal Marmont was dated February 4, 1812.

It was really a most fortunate thing for me to be placed near him. I told him how I was situated, and he understood the matter at once, and promised me to seize upon the first occasion, or even the first pretext, for sending me back to France.

The occasion presented itself at the end of March.

The Emperor being on the point *d'aller en guerre*, *ne sait quand reviendra*, Marshal Marmont determined to send Colonel Jardet, his first aide-de-camp, of whom I have already spoken, to him, commissioning him to lay categorically before the future conqueror of all the

Russias the critical position of the Army of Portugal, its pressing needs, the perils which threatened it, and, above all, the impossibility for it to subsist on the territory which it had to defend.

In order to give more weight to the statement of Colonel Jardet on this latter point, it was decided between the Marshal and the Commissary-General that I should accompany him, and that I should be ready to support him if the Emperor, the Prince of Neuchatel, or the Minister for War, should send for me.

I started with Jardet, furnished with an order formally drawn up, of which I have kept a copy. I left Valladolid without regret, just a year, day for day, since I entered it, making up my mind never to return.

We travelled slowly, on horseback, for five days and five nights, flanked by a good escort, without any accident. Crossing the defile of Pancorlo, a sort of *pâté* of rocks thrown into the very middle of Old Castile, without any connection with the neighbouring mountains, and which is traversed by a small river, we met, as usual, the insurgents who skirted one bank, whilst we followed the other. They fired some shots at us, which neither frightened nor hurt us.

As we approached France, we were informed that the insurgents were waiting for us in force, at a village

which was mentioned to us, and that they intended to play a trick upon us. As a matter of fact, when, at nightfall, we saw this village, it was all illuminated. Arms were loaded, and the escort was formed into close column. Jarret and I took our places in the centre, and I even, following his example, drew my little sword, the guard of which was ornamented with a mummy according to the imperial example, and which sword I have still, having never worn any other. I cocked my pistols, but all for nothing. At the moment we entered the village all the lights were put out, and we traversed it in silence and darkness. The insurgents had apparently found us more numerous and better prepared than they had expected.

No sooner had we arrived at Bayonne than we started immediately for Paris.

The Emperor did not have me summoned. In his 'Mémoires,' the Duke of Ragusa has given a very piquante account of Jarret's mission, of his interviews with the Emperor, and especially of the last. No one, it is said, is so blind as he who will not see, and at that moment the Emperor was one of those blind people.

I saw the Prince of Neuchatel. He received me rather badly, hardly listened to me, and wanted to send

me back to Spain. I got M. de Narbonne, who was the aide-de-camp to the Emperor, to speak to him, and he did not insist on the matter. In any case I would not have returned. I saw the Minister for War, who listened to me very attentively, and after having heard me, he dismissed me, thank God ! without troubling himself either about me or my future destination.

I saw M. de Bassano, who from having been Secretary of State had become Minister for Foreign Affairs, and who offered me the post of Consul-General at Dantzic. That would have been a total change of career, and also have been taking, in the diplomatic career, that one of its two branches which offers no future. I declined respectfully, and recommended myself to his good offices elsewhere.

The Emperor started with his civil and military staff, resting at Dresden, as everyone knows, before passing the Niemen, and delivering himself up to that great adventure. I waited at Paris to see what the new Secretary of State, M. Daru, who knew me, and to whom I had written, would do with me.

But whilst waiting I did not altogether lose my time.

I had met one of my colleagues, Fargues, son of the senator of that name, in Paris again ; he had returned before me, thanks to the intervention of his father.

He was attached to the Prefecture of Police, in which there was nothing dishonourable then, as M. Pasquier had cleansed that Augean stable, and transformed the hot-bed of the political inquisition into a simple municipal magistracy. Fargues proposed to me to go with him on his tour of inspection of the prisons of Paris, with which he was charged.

I accepted eagerly. We visited several of them, amongst others Bicêtre, which at that time performed the fourfold duty of State prison, prison for condemned prisoners, almshouse for old people, and madhouse. Naturally these establishments, which were contiguous to each other, and enclosed within the same circumference, were separated from each other, and governed by different boards of management.

The government of prisons and of hospitals, superior as it was to the former system of government, was yet, at that period, very far from being what it has since become. The prison of Bicêtre was managed with much firmness, humaneness, and prudence. The Governor, if I remember rightly, was the father of M. Damiron, my excellent colleague at the Academy of Moral and Physical Science.

I was present at the sad spectacle which the arrival of those who have just been sentenced affords. I saw

them put on the prison dress, a matter which usually calls for the employment of a good deal of physical force. I was present when they were allotted to the different wings of the prison, and I witnessed the noisy reception which awaited them there. But I saw something more sad still.

At the extremity of a long, narrow, dark corridor, was a small vaulted cell in which no light came except from the corridor itself ; a lamp was necessary there in bright daylight. There we found in that cell, which by the way was very clean, a former Vendean leader called Desol de Grizolles, who had been confined there for ten years, because, so we were told, he had refused to submit to the Consular Government. When he saw us come in, he did not rise from the small table at which he was sitting, and which appeared to me to be covered with books of devotion. He was well dressed, and he wore a calm, grave, and almost serene look.

‘Have you any complaint to make ?’ Fargues asked him.

‘None.’

‘Can anything be done for you ?’

‘Nothing.’

And then he began quietly to read again, and I went out filled with respect and admiration.

This martyr, worthy of the most just of causes, I mean the first *Vendée*, remained in the cell where I saw him till the Restoration. Being restored to liberty, he returned to Brittany, and having obtained a command, I was pleased to hear, in 1815, that during that reactionary period he bore himself with much wisdom, moderation, and prudence.

A few days after I was requested by the Duke of Rovigo to call at the Ministry of Police. Next day, at two o'clock, I did not fail to go, though without guessing what he could want of me, and rather pre-occupied with the idea of the interview. There I met eight or ten of my colleagues, in uniform like myself, like myself ignorant of the object of our meeting, and like myself anticipating nothing good from it. We had to wait about half an hour, when we were shown into a room which adjoined the Minister's own private apartments. There he himself came out to us, and explained to us with kindness and good-humour that he wanted four or five of us to serve as Commissaries of Police in the Hanse Towns. He expatiated complaisantly on the desirability of the posts, and on the services we should be called upon to render to the Emperor and to the Grand Army. Each of us begged to be excused, in the best way he could. I restrained myself. I mentioned

my seniority and my services. The Duke of Rovigo was not at all put out, but he kept to his point that he must have four or five of us. He advised us to make the choice amongst ourselves quietly, at the same time giving us to understand that, if we put it off too long, we might find we had made a bad bargain.

I had quite made up my mind to risk everything, even the cell of M. Desol de Grisolles, rather than to suffer such a disgrace ; but in order to avoid both, if possible, I wrote to M. de Bassano, telling him what had happened, and begging him to give me any post where he liked and as he liked, as long as he got me out of this hornets' nest. By return of post I received my nomination as *auditeur* attached to the Embassy at Warsaw.

That meant a change of career, for it meant entering the diplomatic service on the lowest rung of the ladder ; but under the circumstances I did not hesitate. Besides that, it really mattered but little to me, for my decision was firmly taken to leave the imperial service. I was certain that to succeed in it, neither activity, intelligence, nor zeal would suffice. Since I had been in Spain, the whole service excited my horror ; and all I was anxious to find, in order to leave it, was some door which should not be that of the Keep of Vincennes.

I made my preparations rapidly, and travelled through Germany more rapidly still. On my road, between Weimar and Gotha, I met M. de Saint-Aignan, brother-in-law of M. de Caulincourt, and Minister at the smaller Courts of Saxe. We got out of our carriages, and talked for a considerable time about the present and the future, and about the enterprise of the new Xerxes, who only required one thing in order to resemble his *devancier* altogether, namely, that he should have the marshes of Poland and the sands of Russia flogged.

I stopped at Potsdam only a few hours, in order to visit the tomb of Frederick the Great, and a few hours at Berlin in order to get a general idea of that large and melancholy city; passing through Frankfort-on-the-Oder and Posen at a rapid pace, I arrived in Warsaw a few days after the ambassador. The Emperor had already crossed the Niemen, and the Diet of the Grand Duchy had been convoked by the *roi grand duc*.

The Embassy was composed of :

- (1) The ambassador himself, who, quite as an exception, since 1789, was an ecclesiastic, the Abbé de Pradt, Archbishop of Malines;
- (2) A first secretary, M. Lajard, who had just

returned from Persia, whither he had accompanied General Gardanne, and on that journey had acquired a taste for Oriental studies. He is now a member of the Académie des Inscriptions ;

(3) A second secretary, M. de Bumigay, who has since made some figure as minister, and also as ambassador, in Bavaria, in Switzerland, in Spain, and at Vienna :

(4) Lastly of three attachés, not without reckoning me :

(5) Amédée de Brévannes, Conseiller d'État under the Restoration, one of the most refined and delicate minds that I have ever met ;

(6) Samuel de Panat, nephew of the Chevalier de Panat, Prefect under the Restoration, and a member of the Chamber of Deputies under the Government of July, a very clever and honourable man ;

(7) Aubernon, whom I had known in Illyria, and of whom I have already spoken.

To the personal staff, if I may call it so, soon were added two men, well known at the beginning of the Revolution, and who disappeared with it, though both of them were worthy of a better fate. The first was Pellene, secretary to Mirabeau, and, like him, a Provençal, who greatly helped his chief by looking

up facts, and preparing his arguments, and who was the real author of the great speech on the right of Peace and of War. The other, d'André, was at one time a member of the Right of the Assemblée Constituante, but went over to the Left. He was won over to resistance rather by his own reason than by the Court. He was the victim, like so many others, of follies in which he had not been an accomplice.

Forced to leave France in 1792, these two men, after having wandered abroad, and endured all the miseries of exile, at last found a refuge in Vienna, each in some subordinate employment. There, in 1809, M. de Bassano, in their time editor of the *Logographe*, but who had since become all-powerful with the all-powerful conqueror of Europe, unearthed them, took them by the hand, and made them many promises, which were quickly forgotten, but which he remembered again when, left alone at Wilna, whilst the Emperor was marching on Moscow, he was charged, as it seemed, with the business of resuscitating and organizing the kingdom of Poland. Then he thought fit to summon to his side two fellow-workers who were intelligent enough to assist him, and too obscure to compromise him.

D'André and Pellene were summoned to Wilna, and

requested to wait at Warsaw for further orders, in order to come to an understanding with the ambassador, which was all the more easy and pleasant for them because they had known him for a long time past. The kingdom of Poland having by degrees dissipated itself in smoke, they remained with us definitely, like a fifth wheel to a coach, which having absolutely nothing to do, had, as it was, four times too many in having four.

As a matter of fact I am not quite sure whether, amongst the ideas which, at this period, crossed the brain of the King of kings, that of re-establishing the kingdom of Poland maintained its place for any length of time. I have always doubted it, for my part ; I doubt it still, in spite of M. Thiers, and precisely for those very reasons for doubting which he brings forward, and which do not seem sufficient to convince him.

If the Emperor had had, I will not say the wish, but the slightest inclination to restore Poland, his first care would surely have been to re-construct the Polish army, the only fraction of the nation which had not suffered from the partition, preferring exile to submission, and the French flag to that of Russia or Prussia ; he would have placed the whole Polish army once more under the command of Prince Joseph Poniatowski,

the nephew of the last king of that unhappy country. Then he would have made that army the right of the Grand Army; he would have ordered it, first, to stir Volhynia, Podolia, and all Russian Poland to revolt; thus confederation would have been made easy, and the army would thus have increased at each step and made altogether *la tache d'huile et la peloté de neige*. As a new province was conquered, it would have become incorporated with the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and gradually the dismembered kingdom would have been restored.

And, finally, in order to give force, life, and animation to the work, he would have chosen as representative of his all-powerful goodwill, either some great political personage, though such were certainly rare under the imperial régime, or at least some brilliant and enterprising general, and one covered with glory; and of this class he had more than one to his hand.

Instead of this, he did exactly the contrary. He maintained, increased, perpetuated the breaking-up of the Polish army, leaving only a remnant to Prince Poniatowski, and distributing at least two-thirds of it amongst his *corps d'armée* and his guard. He handed over the undertaking of invading Russian Poland to the Austrian army, whose most pressing interest it was to

check any patriotic rising there, and to repress every hope of a return to the past. Master of Lithuania, he hastened a Government at Wilna, which was quite distinct from that of the Grand Duchy. Lastly, he appointed as his representative, in the height of the war, and amongst a warlike people, his almoner, who styled himself, indeed, almoner of the god Mars, a man who was covered with ridicule, and who was the constant laughing-stock of the imperial Court.

The Abbé de Pradt, a very good sort of man in reality, very regular in his life as a priest, in spite of a little strong language which he used in familiar conversation, possessed neither the gravity of a prelate nor the bearing of an ambassador. A little priestling of Auvergne, sent to the *Assemblée Constituante* by a democracy of *curés*, and a member of the Right from vanity and *esprit de corps*, having lived whilst an *émigré* by writing pamphlets, or anything that circumstances might require, he later, like l'Abbé Maury, threw himself, *a corps perdu*, into the imperial fortunes. I do not think that he ever fully understood the object his imperial master had in view when he sent him to Warsaw, nor the real meaning of the written or verbal instructions which were to guide his conduct.

I do not even know if M. de Bassano, who was

given to him as guardian, himself fully understood that their master's purpose was to raise the enthusiasm of the Poles to white-heat, to flaunt before their eyes the flag of independence, to induce them to drain themselves of their last man and their last crown-piece, without undertaking any responsibility towards them, all the while reserving the power to make peace, at the last moment, at their expense.

After all, and however it might be with regard to our ambassador and his guardian, everything went on smoothly at first. At the moment when I arrived in Warsaw, the Embassy, with its chief at the head, joined in the general patriotic demonstration. It was a case of who could cry *Polsko zye!* (Long live Poland!) loudest; of who could wear most ribbons of the Polish colours on his hat and in his buttonhole; of who could recite best, or applaud longest, the harangues copied from Rulhière, who for his part had copied them from Thucydides or Livy; of who could give or partake of most grand dinners, which would end by emptying purses which were already very low, including that of the ambassador, who was living on borrowed money or on credit.

Thus matters went on till the moment when the Emperor, who was on the point of departing for Wilna,

and who thought apparently that we disguised too much his true intentions, thought fit, when he gave an audience to the Deputies of the Diet, to pour a great pail of cold water on their heads.

The remedy had no effect on those unfortunate people. They were pledged up to the hilt, and had given all that they had ; but it did take effect upon our Embassy, and the Diet having dispersed, we were left pretty much to ourselves, chattering day and night about the *Assemblée Constituante*, about the past and the present, uttering eagles' cries, and spending our time tediously, whilst we waited for news of the Grand Army. Our ambassador continued, however, from time to time to give grand dinners to those Poles whom duties or curiosity kept at Warsaw, and to favour them with a great amount of boasting, telling them how it was in consequence of the misfortunes of the Revolution that he had fallen to the rank of archbishop and ambassador. But the fire was extinguished, discouragement was in all hearts, and anxiety on all countenances.

By degrees everything calmed down, and our Embassy itself was, more or less, dispersed. The ambassador, in order that he might seem to be doing something, sent Aubernon into Galicia, and commissioned him to discover the state of public opinion in

this province, which, although Polish by origin, was now under the dominion of Austria. He sent Panat to the Saxon army, which was under the command of General Regnier, who in his turn was under the orders of the Prince of Schwartzenberg. The ambassador only kept with him his two secretaries and the attachés, Brévannes and myself. I was instructed to come to an arrangement with the Minister of the King of Saxony, Grand Duke of Warsaw, till further orders, and to draw up schemes of reform, on the French model, of the political, administrative, and financial institutions of the Grand Duchy.

I found, among the Polish Ministers of the King of Saxony, honourable, sensible, and intelligent men, and such as were well able to judge of the present situation ; two especially, M. Mostowski, Minister of the Interior, and M. Matuszewicz, Minister of Finance, whose son has since played a certain part in European diplomacy, were men of very high intellect.

Our interviews, however, had no great result :

‘Trois mois entiers ensemble nous pensâmes
Lûmes beaucoup, et rien imaginâmes.’

Nevertheless, there will be found amongst my papers some preparatory work on this subject, and statistical information which is not without interest.

As a matter of fact, there was nothing to be done, for the moment. The Grand Duchy was ruined, in the first place, by the Continental system, next by the preparations for war, and lastly by the war itself; nobody could tell what would become of it, and whatever projects were made could be nothing but dreams. But according to our state of mind, equally removed as it was from enthusiasm and from pessimism, I often asked myself what it was possible, if not actually at the present time to effect, at least reasonable to hope, for this country, which by its misfortunes, its sacrifices and its courage, was so worthy of our sympathy; which, in the last century, had been the victim of the deepest and most shameless perfidy, a country to which I was much attached by family traditions, and to which my great-uncle, Count de Broglie, had given the greater part of his life. The recollection of this fact was still alive in the minds of many, and caused me to be received in a manner for which I was the more grateful, since at that time I myself was not altogether fully acquainted with the negotiations which, for so many years, the Count de Broglie had carried on, both openly and secretly, in the interests of Poland. Since then, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, I have had occasion to run my eyes over them; and among my papers there

will be found, on that subject, a statement which has been very well drawn up, by a very practised hand.

Thinking occasionally about the future of Poland, *car que faire en un gîte, à moins que l'on ne songe*, it seemed to me that the best thing one could hope for from the war, even supposing it turned out most fortunately for France, was that the Grand Duchy of Warsaw would be erected into a nominal kingdom, with some small increase of territory; that, in order to take Galicia from Austria, to take from Prussia the small share of the partition which she still retained, and from Russia, Lithuania, Podolia, Volhynia, Kiew, and all the rest; that in order to establish or to re-establish—for the word does not signify much—in the midst of these three great thieves a true kingdom of Poland, which would be their natural and perpetual enemy, and to maintain it in their very teeth, Napoleon would require more years for fighting than remained to him for living. It would be a great thing for him to provide a stepping-stone towards this object if he were victorious, which was by no means certain, and if he were generous, which was still less so.

How, then, could anyone build, and who could build, on this first stone?

If the Emperor Napoleon at the height of his

power could do nothing, his successors, whoever they might be, would certainly have still less power in the matter, and the petty princes of Germany less again than the former. Saxony could indeed give Poland a king when that kingdom existed, but it would be folly to think of its re-establishing a kingdom of Poland for its own profit.

Therefore, considering all things, there remained only one of the three thieves, and, consequently, the greatest of the three—he who had taken the lion's share, who had power enough, and who was in a position, to rob or to buy out the other two. There could not possibly be a crown of Poland, unless the Emperor of Russia took it into his head to restore it himself and for himself, and to make the crown of the Piasts and of the Jagellons one of the jewels of his imperial crown; unless, indeed, he should think it would be to his glory and for his interest to let loose a satisfied and warlike nation against his European neighbours, instead of crushing them by the assistance of his semi-barbarous subjects.

At the beginning of his reign, that, indeed, had been the favourite idea of the Emperor Alexander, and it had been entertained for a long time by the elder of the Princes Czartoryski, who had been his companion in

childhood, his friend in youth, and later his Minister—the same whom we have seen for twenty years in France bearing with such dignity and equanimity the burden of glorious adversity.

This plan, the execution of which was interrupted by the first Russian war and merely delayed—an idea which was secretly cherished even during the dreams of the peace of Tilsit—was put off again by the fresh war. But even this time I could not help thinking that it was only delayed, and that, without intending it, we should work for that object by our victories; that we should transform the Grand Duchy into a nominal kingdom, in the first place for the King of Saxony, and then some day or other for the Emperor Alexander. It turned out in the end that we had worked for that object by our reverses, and that the catastrophe of 1814 turned the Grand Duchy into a kingdom, and made the Emperor of Russia King of that kingdom. The fresh access of madness on the part of the poor Poles in 1830 has, up to the present, prevented the embryo from developing. Heaven grant that they may not have destroyed their last plank of safety!

Although I was full of these ideas, I took care to communicate them to no one; yet I was involuntarily sympathising with those of our hosts, who were, like

myself, I thought, rather imbued with my own views. The old Prince Czartoryski, father of the Minister, *sans portefeuille*, of the Emperor Alexander, was Grand-Marshal of the Diet; his youngest son was serving bravely in the army corps of Prince Poniatowski; his son-in-law, Count Zamoyski, was a man of considerable importance in Warsaw; the old Princess Czartoryska and her two daughters, the Princess of Würtemberg and the Countess Zamoyska, celebrated in France and England for her beauty, in a manner did the honours of the Diet with much grace and amiability.

From the very first, I was received with much kindness in this hospitable house. The old Prince and Princess had known my family in Paris under the old *régime*, and soon what had been merely a kind reception made way for an intimacy. But I must say it to their honour that, whatever might be their secret thoughts, which I saw agreed with mine, I never detected in them a word, a sentiment, a wish, which was not, above all, for the success of our arms, and for the momentary or lasting triumph of French influence.

As they knew that I intended to go over the Grand Duchy, and to visit the salt mines of Wiliczka, the Prince and Princess invited me to stay, both in going and returning, at their castle at Pulawy—that magnifi-

cent place, which was destroyed during the Civil War of 1830, and which only exists now in the verses of Delille, which same verses hardly exist except in the memory of his contemporaries, whose small number is growing daily less.

I accepted the invitation gladly, and soon afterwards I set out on my journey, like the curious and idle man I was.

I spent about a fortnight at Pulawy on my way to Cracow, and as long on my way back. I never saw a residence more enviable, not even in England, which is so justly renowned for its mansions, as for many other things.

The castle was neither large, nor regularly built, nor even magnificent, but the Vistula ran at its feet, and its waters, bank-high, flowed through the gardens, the park, and through all the country, under the shade of a forest of venerable firs ; on both banks were scattered in profusion, like so many unconsidered works, monuments copied from the most beautiful models of Italy and Greece—the tomb of Scipio, the temple of the Sibyl, etc., or else such as retraced the grandest recollections of the history of Poland, and contained most precious relics, consisting of weapons, jewels, or other ornaments.

In the centre of the garden was a small house in Gothic style, built entirely, from the base to the roof, of stones which had been brought either from some monument or from some celebrated spot; each stone had, as an inscription, the attestation of the place it came from, and the date when it became part of this little *necropolis*. On the pediment was engraved this line from Virgil :

‘Sunt lacrymæ rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.’

I am not at all given to melancholy ; it is a state of mind which I can understand without experiencing it. Yet I must confess that this spot was with me a favourite resort ; I frequented it constantly, and almost involuntarily. When I reached it, I remained there, and often caught myself, as I read the inscriptions with which the walls were, in a manner, diapered, first of all dreaming about the destinies of the unhappy country, whose *disjecta membra* I saw raised up and joined together like the dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision ; then about the destiny of the noble family, which, in its days of prosperity, had raised this monument to the instability of human things ; and lastly, about the mysterious course of human destinies. I almost fancied that I heard, as one does when reading Bossuet’s ‘*Histoire Universelle*,’ the crash of empires falling one on the

other, and I mechanically repeated the lines of Virgil, who has generally very little sense when one tries to understand him, but who awakens ideas and feelings in the soul, like music, which no words can express.

The interior of the castle was very plain, but it contained an immense library in all languages, and the old Prince was a huge library in himself: he was a great *savant* and a profound Oriental scholar; he spoke all the European languages, and all their different dialects, with a rare perfection, and knew the contents of books just as well as he understood the language in which they were written. I shall never forget that, at that period when the philosophy of Kant was shining in Germany in all its brightness, and that of Fichte was beginning to dawn, he explained them both to me very clearly, and, at the same time, with gentle humour, and so well that I profited by it, as will be seen a little later on.

The old Princess, who was a little woman, was in all respects a great lady, simple, rigid, exquisitely polite, and full of kindness without *laisser aller*.

I do not know what truth or falsehood there may be for the faults which the stories of her time lay to her charge, but M. de Talleyrand has often told me stories, amongst others those which go by the name of the

Duc de Lauzun, which are a tissue of lies and nonsense; but, however that may be, the Princess Czartoryska, whom I knew inspired respect, kept others at their proper distance, and awakened in the mind no recollections that did not do her honour. Her two daughters were ladies of noble character and cultured mind, whose conversation was gentle and serious. The frequenters of this beautiful spot, whether strangers like myself or familiars, were not considered unworthy of joining in it. The real and sincere interest which I felt for the cause of my generous entertainers, and perhaps even more the perfect freedom of mind with which I examined the chances of the future, without any illusion, but also without being discouraged, ended in my gaining their entire confidence, and when I took my leave, I received tokens of friendship which I remember to this day, though Pulawy and its inhabitants exist no more.

I left for Cracow, promising and intending to return.

Cracow is the cradle of Poland, *gniazdo Polsky*—a small, quaint town, rich in historical associations. The neighbourhood is charming; it is situated at the foot of the mountains of Silesia, and the wooded gorges of the mountains are wild, almost savage, occupied by convents, and abounding in various delightful scenery.

I carefully visited several times the salt mines of Wiliczka, the possession of which is, or at least was then, divided between the Grand Duchy—in which the free city of Cracow was enclosed—and Austria, the mistress of Galicia. I shall not enter into any details about the working of these mines, their riches, their markets, etc. These details can be found everywhere, and the statistical information which I gathered and have kept will, after the lapse of forty-six years, not at all agree with the actual state of things.

At the period of which I am speaking, the descent into these mines was made in a rather dangerous manner.

Three leather straps were attached, as well as might be, to the thick rope which was used to raise and to lower the heavy weights by means of a pulley. These three straps formed a very narrow seat, sitting on which you had to clutch the rope with both legs and one arm; the other arm being used to keep the rope from the sides of the wall of earth or of salt which formed the pits themselves. Thus you descended to great depths, at the risk, if you did not make proper use of the arm which was disengaged, of being roughly knocked against the wall, or if you let go the rope with the other arm or with the legs, or if the straps were to

break, of being precipitated into the pit head-first. I have often thought of this, when reading in the 'Antiquary,' of Sir Walter Scott, the account of the escape of Ochiltree and Lovel across the rocks, during the storm; and, as an example of the force of imagination in such a case, I may say that, when several times undergoing the trial of the descent or the ascent which I have just described, I never felt any emotion, whereas I can hardly look down from a second or third story, leaning against a window whose ledge is breast-high. After descending into the interior of the mine, you went through it for hours. It is a labyrinth of galleries cut at random, according to the direction of the seams. It is so dark that you cannot get along without the help of torches, and you can go several leagues without retracing your steps. You descend from gallery to gallery, till at last the edge of a tolerably large salt-lake is reached, which is crossed in a boat, by the light of torches and amidst the noise of the explosion of gunpowder, which detaches, with loud reports, prisms of salt, cut with great difficulty in the sides of the cave. Nothing can give a better idea of the entrance to Avernus, as described by the poets: the boat which carries you might actually be, as far as the imagination is concerned, *Charon's boat*.

On my return from Cracow to Warsaw, I stayed, according to my promise, at Pulawy for a few days. There I heard of the two terrible and fruitless victories which the Emperor had gained, at Smolensk, on August 17, and at Moscowa, on September 7. Happily the youngest son of Prince Czartoryski, who was serving with the corps of Prince Poniatowski, had come out of those two terrible days safe and sound. And here I will relate what Prince Poniatowski himself told me later. As he was explaining to me the attack on Smolensk, and the evident impossibility of carrying a wall by a charge of cavalry, he said, laughing, 'I do not know exactly what the Emperor wanted us to do, but I fancy how much he could demand without disgusting us.' The account of the assault of Smolensk, as described by M. Thiers, does not exactly agree with this incident.

When I reached Warsaw, I heard of the burning of Moscow.

No one can properly judge, at this distance of time and place, nor can history ever give, the impression which this terrible event had on all minds. From this moment the horizon of the future appeared to all of us charged with heavy clouds, continually and daily increasing, and, although everyone was anxious, nobody hardly ventured to ask for news.

I tried to beguile myself and to lessen my anxiety by applying myself unceasingly to the study of the Polish language and literature. In Warsaw I had met a French ecclesiastic, I think he was a canon, who had lived for a long time in that town, and had studied both profoundly. He devoted a great part of his mornings to me. He had written a very learned grammar, which he allowed me to copy, and which I have kept; and he was also superintending the publication of a dictionary, to which everyone subscribed, and which I possess. I collected the works of the principal authors of note in that language, and have managed to keep the greater part of them. This time again I found within myself a refuge from the times and circumstances.

The approach of the hard weather, and the general perplexity, brought back to Warsaw a great number of families who had left it for a time. As a rule we passed our evenings either at the house of Princess Tiskewicz, sister of Prince Poniatowski, a great friend of M. de Talleyrand, and a lady whom everyone had known very well in Paris, or else at the house of Madame de Vauban, who was separated, and very much separated, from the Count de Vauban. The Count played a certain part in the wars of Vendée,

and published an insulting book about Count d'Artois. Madame de Vauban had been for a long time *maitresse en titre* of Prince Poniatowski, and as such, strange to say, she had enjoyed in Warsaw all the power of a legitimate wife. She behaved herself like one after she had lost the functions of her office, and all society continued respectfully to surround her.

Our evenings were very dull.

The ladies made lint, so as to be ready for any emergency ; and the men related to each other the reports current in town and country. We looked at the thermometer, and lost ourselves in sinister conjectures.

We soon heard of the evacuation of Moscow, and after that we remained without news for a long time. Nothing was heard of the Grand Army ; nothing of the Prince of Schwartzenberg and General Reynier, to whom was entrusted the duty of covering the Grand Duchy against the army of Admiral Tehitchakoff.

There was, however, one man amongst us who probably knew more than we did about the matter. This was an Austrian diplomatist, who was in no official position, M. Neumann, whom many people have known since in France and England. Rightly or wrongly, he passed for the natural son of Prince

Metternich. I do not remember what his reason was for living in Warsaw ; he was a clever, well-read, polite man, but we suspected that he was more inclined to report our uneasiness than to share it.

At last, after six weeks of perplexity, at the beginning of December, the ambassador sent for me one morning. It was very early. I found him pale, and in a state of consternation. Without a word he handed me the bulletin of the Grand Army, the fatal bulletin of the Beresina, which he had received during the night. When I read it I was struck with horror, prepared though I was for the worst, and in spite of an amount of reticence which was discernible to the most practised eye. The ambassador ordered me to take this mournful communication to M. Otto, our ambassador at Vienna, at once. The mission was anything but an agreeable one, but there was no question of self at such a moment. I made my preparations without delay : I bought, in order to travel more rapidly, one of those very light carriages which are called *britska* in Poland, and by the end of the morning I was on my road. I traversed the Grand Duchy very quickly, but the Austrian provinces more slowly. The report of our disasters had spread there, confusedly indeed, but generally. The rising of men's feelings against France

burst forth on all sides. I had some difficulty in obtaining post-horses, and I was sometimes received with remarks which at any other time I should perhaps have been obliged to take notice of, but which I passed over, under the circumstances, by pretending not to understand German ; which, by the way, was correct in a certain sense ; for though I could read German fluently, I only understood it very badly.

As soon as I arrived at Vienna, I went straight to the Embassy, where I found M. Otto, who was an honourable man, a faithful servant, with a wise and moderate mind, in inexpressible grief. He was walking about his study in all directions, a prey to disquietude, assailed by contradictory reports which came to him from all sides. To give a correct idea of his state, it will be enough to say that this twenty-ninth bulletin, which had almost frozen us with horror at Warsaw, caused him irrestrainable joy : he threw his arms round my neck, though he had never seen me before, and wrote at once to Prince Metternich to announce my arrival. I dressed hastily, and we started together for the Imperial Chancellerie. It occupied the very palace in which I had lived in 1809.

On our way, messenger of evil though I was, my mind was divided between the unpleasantness of my

errand and curiosity about the coming interview. I had known M. de Metternich slightly in Paris—known him, that is, as well as the difference of age and position between us would allow—I had met him often in official and in fashionable society; I had even been brought into closer contact with him at the Conference of Altenburg. I was impatient to see what effect our wretched communication would have upon him; whether or not pleasure at our disasters would gain the upper hand over his vexation at learning that the Emperor himself had escaped.

I must do him the justice to say that he did not move a muscle. I never saw such self-possession. He read the bulletin carefully, evinced quite an affectionate interest for the sufferings of our army, took the protestations and the hopes of M. Otto in good part, was overflowing in his appreciation of the resources which the Emperor still possessed, and, as that very day he was going to give a grand dinner, he invited us both.

Now this was not all pleasure. I disliked the idea of being dragged out, like some strange wild animal, before company which naturally bore us no good-will; but, nevertheless, I put a good face on the matter.

The dinner was long, dull, and silent. Everyone

looked at me, and spoke to his neighbour in a low voice. After dinner everybody was equally silent; no one asked me any questions, and the company separated early.

I spent three or four days in Vienna. M. Otto's daughter was about to be married to one of my colleagues, M. Pelet (of the Lozère). Neither M. nor Madame Otto knew their future son-in-law. I was asked about him all sorts of questions; and as my answers, which were strictly true, were very satisfactory to them, these excellent parents overwhelmed me with kindness. They saw little society; and I soon found out the reason. When I attempted to call upon some of the people who had received me so kindly a few years before, when I knocked at the hospitable houses which had been opened to me so willingly, everywhere I found the doors closed.

My only refuge was the porch of the Prince de Ligne, where I was received, like I always was, with open arms; and from him I learned positively what I could already guess. Such was the state of the ruling opinion, that, in high society, no one would dare to receive a Frenchman unless he were obliged to do so by State duties or by his official position.

As my mission was fulfilled, and there was nothing

to detain me, I made haste to return to the theatre of events, and so I started. The cold, which at first was bearable, became intense, and the thermometer fell lower every hour. The snow came down in great flakes, and the roads, which had been open till then, were blocked by it. I had had my little carriage put on a sledge ; but, in spite of this precaution, I was upset seven or eight times before reaching Olmütz. I thought it would be tempting Providence to go on so, and I took a grand resolution. I left my carriage at the inn at Olmütz—God knows for whose profit—and I continued my journey in an open post-sledge, braving all the inclemency of the weather. It was so cold that two bottles of rum with which kind Madame Otto had increased my outfit, wrapping them up in hay, froze like pure water. When I arrived at Cracow, I was absolutely benumbed ; the sun's rays seemed warmless ; but there I had a sublime idea, an idea which in simplicity, in ability, in profoundness, equalled the egg of Columbus and the wheel-barrow of Pascal, and I put it down here for my own glorification ; and if ever anybody else, besides myself, puts it into practice, my name will be imperishable.

I bought a little cart merely covered with rough awning ; this I had placed on a sledge, and as it was

flat on the ground, there was no risk of being overturned. I had it filled with hay up to the top, and I got into it up to the neck, just like they used to bury the guilty Vestal virgins, and from that moment I did not feel the cold; on the contrary, my feet and legs, which had been benumbed and cramped, began to relax, and, as the circulation set in, I suffered cruelly from that pain which children know so well, and which nurses call ‘pins and needles.’

Half way to Warsaw, on getting out of my hay-loft and entering the post-house, the name of which I have forgotten, chattering a few words of Polish in order to get post-horses, I heard a sepulchral voice which, from the depths of a bed placed at the end of the room, mumbled a few words of French about equal to my Polish, but with a very pronounced English accent. The voice belonged to M. Barlow, United States Minister in France, who had followed M. de Bassano as far as Wilna, continuing, with the tenacity of his countrymen and that of his own character, his complaints about the results of the Continental blockade. In order to avoid being taken by the Russians, or robbed by the French in the general confusion, he was returning to France by way of Vienna. To guard against the cold, he had had his carriage heated to such a degree that it gave him in-

flammation of the chest, of which he was dying. In vain I offered him my services; he was very well taken care of by his own people. He survived our interview only a few hours.

I related this singular meeting to the Chamber of Deputies when, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, I defended the treaty which justified the complaints of poor M. Barlow.

When I arrived at Warsaw, I found that the ambassador had been recalled, and was preparing to return to France. He was in travelling-dress, and was arranging his hair accordingly. He told me of the passage of the Emperor, and of his own interview with him at an humble inn, of his promises to the Polish Ministers, and repeated to me what Napoleon had said to them, which nearly agrees with what M. Thiers relates.

The ambassador, who departed on the very day of my arrival, left the embassy, which thus became a simple legation to M. Bignon.

The latter had been Minister to the King of Saxony, Grand Duke of Warsaw, which post he occupied when the embassy was established. He had remained at Warsaw, partly, I suspect, to keep an eye upon us. He succeeded his own successor, and under his orders I closed one of the most variously occupied years of my life.

V.

1813.

I AM writing my own history; I am neither writing history, nor for history; I mean to say nothing about the disaster of Wilna, which, perhaps, was even more terrible than that of the Beresina, nothing about the defection of General York, nothing about the rout of the shattered remnants of our army; nothing, either, about the behaviour of King Murat, or of that of Prince Eugène, which was as different as was the difference between the two men.

We remained at Warsaw for about three weeks after the ambassador left. We were covered by the corps of the Prince of Schwartzenberg, which was composed of Austrians and Saxons, and by the remains of the Polish *corps d'armée* which was commanded by Prince Poniatowski.

M. Thiers mentions an armistice, which is said to have been concluded at the end of the campaign, between

the Austrians and the Russians, but I never heard a word about it. On the contrary, I remember very well the contention which arose, almost immediately, between the Prince of Schwartzenberg and Prince Poniatowski: the former maintained that with thirty thousand odd troops, the greater part of whom had not suffered either during the war or in the retreat, we might boldly attack the Russian army, which had suffered almost as much as ours; the latter, whilst not absolutely refusing, demurred, not without difficulty, and more than once, to my own knowledge: the altercation grew so warm that duels between the Austrian and Polish staffs nearly resulted from it.

Meanwhile time went on, events ran their course, the French army evacuated Posen, the Russian army was menacing Silesia, Warsaw was in a state of ferment, and, whether we liked it or not, we had to think of leaving it.

The Austrian army fell back on Galicia; the Saxon *corps d'armée* marched towards Torgau, and the Polish corps retreated on Cracow, and some of the great Polish families followed it thither; amongst them was that of Count Zamoyski.

The retreat was painful and difficult; the cold was terrible, and the snow lay in heaps on the road; the

train of vehicles and impedimenta was a long one, and the unequal speed they travelled at made the maintenance of order next to impossible. We were obliged to make our first halt at Pétrikaw, to get the laggards together ; then another at Ozenstochow, a curious fortified convent ; and finally, in the best order it could, all the caravan reached its last destination.

I had gone on first with Rumigny, our second secretary, in my faithful little cart, which was drawn by two good horses. We fulfilled the duty of quartermasters, which was by no means a useless one, since the town of Cracow was not at all ready to be turned into a capital at a moment's notice. Our first secretary, Lajard, took charge of all the lagging expedition with much sense, watchfulness, and activity.

Our legation found suitable quarters in an old palace, which was easily made habitable. M. Bignon went to reside there with Lajard and Rumigny, and there he retained the greater portion of his former legation ; amongst others, two persons whom we shall meet with again towards the end of this narrative, M. Miège, who was later Consul-General at Malta, and M. Desage, who was at that time very young, and who, from 1830 to 1848, played a modest but important part as director of the political division of Foreign Affairs.

As for me, my new chief left me to my own devices; he allowed me to lodge where I could, and to employ my time as I liked. I was not in his good graces; I do not know, or, rather, I know too well, why.

M. Bignon was a faithful, and more than faithful servant, zealous, and more than zealous; to speak plainly, he was a devoted servant of the Emperor, and of the imperial *régime*. Having been Minister at Warsaw before the war, he had been left in that capital, as I said, with the confidential mission of watching the Archbishop of Malines and his embassy. He knew what to think about me. He knew that whilst I spoke becomingly about the Government under which I served, I neither felt nor affected any fanatical adherence to it. He suspected my friends. As he had nothing more to do now than maintain the fidelity of the unhappy Poles and to give an account of the state of public feeling, if my disposition and character would have allowed me to assist in this business, I should have been heartily welcomed; but, not being able to hope for that, and being obliged to go for information to other sources, he preferred, and not unreasonably, perhaps, to hold aloof from me. I had not only nothing to do with the correspondence, but it was a secret from me, and he only spoke to me about

the rain, of which we had plenty at that time, and of the fine weather, which was still a very long way off.

I made up my mind how to act without regret and without a murmur.

There was an observatory at Cracow which was managed by two French and several assistant professors whom they had trained. Their instruction was by no means limited to astronomy—it extended over several branches of physics, and even of chemistry. I made friends with them, and spent part of my mornings there.

In the evenings, Count Zamoyski threw open his small house to those guests whom he had been in the habit of receiving at his residence in Warsaw, and Madame Zamoyska did the honours with her usual grace.

I regularly passed my evenings there when I was not invited to balls or to other social gatherings ; for—and it is a remarkable circumstance—the winter at Cracow this year, as in other years, was a very lively one, and the carnival went on as usual. The balls were gay, the parties brilliant, and the ladies dressed with taste. I doubt whether at this day, and even in France, a winter in Lyons or Bordeaux could rival what I saw with my own eyes at that time and in that country.

During my stay in that city, I formed a few friendships with the staff of Prince Poniatowski, and with the Prince himself. The staff consisted of young men of the highest families in the Grand Duchy, and exactly resembled a French staff with this one exception, that in the former, patriotic enthusiasm replaced the desire for promotion and enthusiasm for the imperial cause. As for the Prince, it was impossible to know him without becoming attached to him.

On the field of battle, by common consent, he was not merely a brave soldier, he was a hero; in his relations with France he was not merely loyal, but he acted like a knight of old, and his fidelity was all the more meritorious because he did not at all deceive himself. Whilst he looked upon his cause as desperate, he yet went straight on, with his head erect, towards the fate which waited for him, and which he was not long in meeting. In his manner of life he was a *grand seigneur* of the last century; generous, liberal, of easy morals and a lively character, and adored by all who had much to do with him; he was the comrade of his aides-de-camp, and was obeyed because he was always the first under fire, and because he always shared with everyone all he happened to have.

It was a pleasure to accompany him to the drilling ground, and to see him exercising his recruits. His activity, his vivacity, his good humour and soldierly manner, won him all hearts. Within the radius which his *corps d'armée* occupied round Cracow, he would take the first peasant he found, without any ceremony, would have his hand well scrubbed, his hair cut and his beard shaved off, and then would hand him over to a non-commissioned officer, who taught him how to handle his arms. At the end of a month the peasant donned a uniform, and the Emperor of France had in him an excellent soldier, ready and fit for anything, regretting nothing, and thinking of nothing but of living and dying under his colours. But unhappily, a hundred yards off, within the radius which the Russian army occupied, General Sacken did the same thing, and encountered no greater difficulty in doing it; he laid hands upon a similar peasant, perhaps upon a relation of the one of whom we have first spoken, he washed and trimmed him in the Muscovite fashion, dressed him in a green uniform, and here was an excellent soldier for the Emperor Alexander, ready and fit for anything, regretting nothing, and thinking of nothing but of living and dying under his colours. Alas, unhappy country!

During the month of March, the Emperor, after having raised an army of five hundred thousand men with truly wonderful rapidity, recalled M. Otto from Vienna, and M. de Narbonne was selected to replace him. At the express and urgent request of the new ambassador, I received orders to join him, and set out accordingly. I took leave of my friends, promising them to seize the first opportunity of paying them a visit, even if I could stay in Cracow but one day, and I kept my word.

I arrived in Vienna at the beginning of April. M. de Narbonne was already installed. He was accompanied by his three aides-de-camp, Castellane, Tiburce Sébastiani, and Fernand de Chalot. Charles de Montigny, the adopted son of M. de Jaucourt, was attaché to his embassy; he had retained all the staff of M. Otto's establishment, but only entrusted them with the affairs of the *chancellerie*; I had the exclusive charge of all political matters.

As he was received with open arms by the father of our Empress, and by M. de Metternich, and overwhelmed with apparent or real signs of affection—the one just as much as the other—M. de Narbonne had no cause for complaint. He kept up a large establishment; he was assiduously invited everywhere; the aristocracy

followed the example of their masters, but the devil did not lose anything by it.

Nor did M. de Narbonne have any illusions. He was quite able to distinguish all the hatred and hope which were hidden under these assumed demonstrations. He saw many people, morning and evening. When he came home at about one o'clock in the morning, he found me alert in his study; he then told me what his observations and reflections had been during the day, and I noted them down, and, if possible, turned them into a despatch. In the morning, when he woke up, I submitted my night's work to his inspection, and after either having approved of or corrected it, he generally would add a letter in his own hand, which I copied whilst his private secretary copied the despatch. The whole was then sealed and sent off, without anyone except us three knowing anything of the contents. M. de Narbonne's private secretary was M. Tellier, who has since died as Consul-General at Genoa.

If I were writing memoirs, I should here have a fine occasion to expose in detail the progress of, and the incidents in, the negotiations which, at this fatal period, preceded the rupture between France and Austria; but I shall not do anything of the sort, and that for two reasons: first, because this work has already been

done, and very well done, by M. Thiers ; and secondly, because I co-operated in it beforehand, and this is how it happened.

When, towards the middle of August, that is to say, at the moment when hostilities broke out, M. de Narbonne bade me good-bye, when he went off to shut himself up in Torgau, alas ! never to leave it again, he gave me his despatch-box—a large black despatch-box, which I knew very well, since I used to keep it in order—all his official and confidential correspondence, both with the Emperor and with the department of Foreign Affairs. The private papers of the embassy were distributed and classified in this despatch-box. When he entrusted me with the key of it, he particularly enjoined me not to give it up to anyone except to himself.

M. de Narbonne was taken from us in a few months.

I religiously preserved what he had given into my keeping for nearly twenty years, from 1813 to 1833: the department for Foreign Affairs, not knowing, most likely, that it was in my hands, never claimed it.

At that period it was the custom to allow diplomatic agents to retain all documents of which they were, *virtute officii*, depositaries, during their life, as long as they were given up at their death ; the department then

interposing to take possession of such papers as they thought fit, as the property of the State. Thus it was, for instance, that the 'Mémoires de Saint-Simon' were forfeited by his family, and, for a hundred and fifty years, remained buried in the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, on the pretext that he had been ambassador in Spain.

When I became Minister for Foreign Affairs, I made up my mind to put a stop to this double abuse. I issued an order that every diplomatic agent, not excepting the Minister himself, should, when he left office, hand over to his successor, on leaving his post, all papers and documents which related to his administration ; that each should, on his own account, make out an inventory and a statement of contents, which, being signed by both parties, should free the diplomatic agent, who had either been recalled or had resigned, from all liability to inquiry or proceedings, either before or after his death. He was merely allowed to keep a copy of the papers or documents which he might select, on undertaking to publish nothing without the knowledge of the department.

After having thus provided for the future, I looked after the past. I endeavoured, as far as I could, to make the order retrospective, and to obtain, *à l'amiable*,

the restitution of the different documents which had been dispersed, and, of course, I *practised what I preached*. I returned the despatch-box of M. de Narbonne to the department, without taking anything out; and M. Thiers has drawn on the correspondence, documents and narratives which it contained for the materials which conclude his fifteenth volume. It is a very interesting narrative: the facts are set out very exactly, lucidly, and strictly—too much so almost; I mean that their connection is too close, too connected in the recital, and less interspersed with various accidents and incidents than they were in reality.

One must not be astonished at this. The state of affairs at Vienna was critical and precarious. In the negotiations, or perhaps, to speak more exactly, in the intrigues which were going on there, the interests at stake varied with the chances of each day, and the views of the different parties, which also were variable, had more than one aim.

As a matter of fact, no one was deceived. The Emperor himself, in his innermost thoughts, would allow of no peace but such as he might dictate himself with his foot on his adversary's neck. When he offered Austria her share in the spoils of Prussia and of Russia, he had no idea either of dazzling or of influencing her.

He only negotiated in order to gain time, so as to be able to finish his preparations. All he hoped and all he wished for was to anticipate the defection of Austria, and to be able to strike his great blow before she declared herself against him, and then to have her at his mercy, just as he had had Prussia at his mercy after the Battle of Austerlitz.

As his only aim was to beat about the bush as long as possible, he fancied he should succeed better by opening such a negotiation, than by following the advice which Cambacérès, M. de Talleyrand, and M. de Caulaincourt gave him, which was to leave Austria to herself, without asking anything of her, or offering her anything; and I think he was right. To have done as they suggested would have meant giving up that Power without any motive, and almost without any pretext for resistance, at the solicitation of the combined Powers.

But whilst Napoleon looked for no result from the negotiations which he was carrying on, he nevertheless gave himself to them, heart and soul, and brought his ardour, his authority, and his impatience to bear, and, as in everything else, the devil was in him; he spared neither entreaties, promises, nor menaces, even at the risk of hastening the *dénouement*. Who could tell,

besides, what an access of weakness or of ambition might not have obtained from Austria? To a gambler, the smallest card may seem to be able to win the biggest stake.

On his part, M. de Narbonne saw clearly into the Emperor's intentions without the latter having imparted them to him, and he also clearly understood the true position of Austria; that it would be suicidal on her part to help France to crush Russia, and to destroy what remained of Prussia. He also very clearly saw the tendency, and what would be the definite result, of the negotiations; to press Austria to intervene, under the guise of mediation, would be to authorize her to levy her last man and to raise her last dollar; it would be to make her the arbiter of the terms of peace; but on the one hand his instructions were precise and pressing, and he could neither neglect nor evade them, for every French mail brought him a message to spur him on afresh; on the other hand—shall I say it?—he saw hardly any chance of peace, small as it was, except in the road which, from no choice of his own, he was taking. Who could tell whether the Emperor, when he found himself placed between more than favourable conditions, and the fear of having two hundred thousand additional men to deal with, might

not hesitate ; whether just one grain of common sense, one spark of wisdom, might not enter his head ?

As for M. de Metternich, he knew the Emperor perfectly, and was ready for anything ; he thoroughly understood his own position, and was ready to risk everything ; but, having made up his mind only to risk all to win all, he did not choose to act except when obliged to do so, and till he had exhausted all means of avoiding action, till he had offered his master's son-in-law such conditions as it would be invidious and mad on his part to refuse ; in any case, he only intended to act freely, and in his own interests, without allowing himself to be carried away by the various prejudices, both from within and from without, of his own country.

In such a complicated position, where everyone was, in one way or another, playing a double game ; where everyone was pursuing two objects, one in default of the other, it may be easily understood how everyone was wide awake and on the look-out ; how the smallest fact, the slightest rumour, the merest word, a falling leaf or a buzzing fly, was enough to set everything in an uproar. One day it was reported that the King of Saxony, who had taken refuge in Bavaria under French protection, had escaped, in a manner on the sly, in

order to put himself at the disposal of Austria in Bohemia; another day, that the Prince of Schwartzberg, who had retired into Galicia with his *corps-d'armée*, had received an order from the Emperor Napoleon to re-enter the Grand Duchy, and to attack the Russians; then that the Emperor of Austria, by way of retaliation, had taken into his head to summon Prince Poniatowski to quit Bohemia in order to rejoin the French army, and to lay down his arms on the way; then that the Emperor Napoleon forbade him to do so, and that the two *corps-d'armée* were on the point of hostilities, etc., etc.

In a rapid journey which I made to Cracow on this delicate subject, I found means to convince myself that the state of distraction and perplexity which the position of affairs engendered and maintained was not confined to Vienna or to the more important places, but extended everywhere, and descended to all ranks; and I found it again, so to say, under the form of insolent curiosity or of menace, at every post-house where I changed horses, and at every inn. Perhaps this changeable current of agitation, news, apprehensions and conjectures does not stand out clearly enough in the serious and exact narrative of M. Thiers; but then again, perhaps, had he entered fully into all

this, he might have lost himself in particulars and minute details.

The first difficulty to be got over was the inevitable and impending hostile meeting between the Emperor and the allies. This meeting might decide everything. If the Emperor gained a decisive victory, like that of Austerlitz or Jena, he would again be master of the world, and nothing would remain for the Austrian Government but to bend its head and ask for pardon. But if, on the other hand, he was beaten, and driven back to the French frontier with the sword in his loins, then the Emperor Alexander would become the King of kings, the Agamemnon of Europe, the deliverer of the Continent. The popular movement in Austria was dragging its Government at the tail of the allies, though she only figured in the lowest rank, and in the background, decried, despised, and declared to be a traitor to the German Fatherland.

In order that M. de Metternich might keep a high hand, it was necessary that he should have a free hand, and for that very reason it was necessary that the Emperor Napoleon should be the victor, and yet should only be half a victor.

It can be easily imagined with what anxiety the messengers were awaited, and with what avidity all

news was received and commented on. I am not at all exaggerating when I say that, in many hotels in Vienna, the windows were opened because people thought they heard the cannon during the Battle of Lützen ; neither am I exaggerating when I state as a fact that there were some military men who declared positively that they had heard it.

The event, as one knows, turned out according to the wish of M. de Metternich. Although the Emperor was victorious at Lützen and at Bautzen, one after the other, the victories were so hardly and so dearly won, that he felt bound to accept the idea of a congress, and himself to seek an armistice, so as to be able to recruit his forces somewhat. M. Thiers affirms that this, desiring war as he did, was a great fault on his side ; that he let the chance of crushing the allies, and of completing their destruction, slip. If, in fact, that depended on him, and if he committed such a mistake, it was certainly the first of that sort with which he had to reproach himself ; and he paid dearly for it, for it cost him the domination of Europe, his throne and his liberty. Whatever may be the truth as to that mistake, real or imaginary, he certainly, after the blow was struck, did make a grave mistake, when he commissioned M. de Caulaincourt to negotiate an armistice,

because the very choice of the negotiator gave rise to the idea that much more was at stake, and that it was a matter of treating with the allies directly, without the concurrence of Austria.

M. de Metternich, during the whole time that the fortune of war seemed to waver, had put a very good face on the matter, and sent us, hour by hour, all the news which he received, with an openness which wrongly aroused our suspicion. He was informed of the arrival of M. de Caulaincourt at the outposts of the allies by M. de Nesselrode, who himself started without delay for Vienna, in order to give Austria an opportunity for breaking off the bargain.

That was the decisive blow.

M. de Metternich carried off his master, as it were, and took him, without a rest, to Gitschin, in the middle of Bohemia, into a castle which is situated at about an equal distance from Dresden, where the Emperor Napoleon was, and from Breslau, where the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia were, and from there he undertook to dictate his conditions to the belligerents.

Their departure had been so sudden, and had been kept so secret, that we were only informed of it when it was almost too late.

Two Frenchmen, whose names I have forgotten at

this moment—two old servants of French *émigrés*, living at Vienna; the one in a small way of business, and the other in some subordinate employ, but who, both of them, were intimate with the people connected with the imperial stables—came and told us of it. M. de Narbonne at once went straight to M. de Metternich, and had rather a lively explanation with him. All he got was good words and bad reasons. The Emperor started in the evening, and met M. de Nesselrode on the way. The next day M. de Narbonne himself was on the road to Dresden. He only took me with him, and told his aides-de-camp to meet him there. The embassy remained at Vienna.

We arrived at Dresden at the beginning of June, and remained till July 15.

M. de Narbonne was well received, and his leaving Vienna at his own risk, without awaiting orders, stood him in good stead; but he was reproached for having executed his instruction with activity and carefulness. Such was the lot of all servants of the State at that period. Without being absolutely received with favour, without having the real designs of his master confided to him, he was kept in reserve for the Congress, or perhaps better, for the sham Congress which was being arranged.

I have a very pleasant recollection of the five weeks which I passed at Dresden. I spent my mornings sometimes in visiting the picture-gallery, which is one of the finest in Europe, sometimes in going over that part of the neighbouring country which is rightly called the Saxon Switzerland, but most frequently I used to cross the Elbe by a half-ruined bridge, in order to see our young conscripts being drilled in platoon and manual exercise. They seemed to me to be very awkward, without any experience, and raw novices, and the instructors who badgered them gave them an appearance of timidity which they certainly did not have before the enemy. It was a disquieting and sad sight.

One day when I was giving myself up to those thoughts, with my eyes fixed on several groups who were trying in vain to keep step, I was joined by General Mathieu Dumas, who was at that time Commissary-General of the Grand Army. I had known him for a long time ; he had been my father's friend and companion in arms in America. I told him of my presentiments, which, as he did not disguise from me, he shared, and when M. de Narbonne soon joined us, he told us the following anecdote.

‘I was crossing,’ he said, ‘the very place where we

are now, with the Emperor, a few days ago, and with him I watched the exercises, or rather the outline of exercises which we are watching. The young soldiers were not any more expert than they are just now, and the drill-sergeants vied with each other in their abuse of them, and the Emperor, who was very vexed, began to find fault with the drill-sergeants who could do no better. He even took the musket from one of them, and took his place, but with no greater success. Then, turning towards me, and reading in my face the thoughts which were passing through my mind, he said to me in a half joking, half vexed voice :

““ You do not believe in miracles ?”

““ Yes, I do,” I answered, “ provided I have time to make the sign of the cross.’

‘ He broke off the conversation, spoke of something else, and returned to his quarters.’

Our evenings were spent very gaily. The Emperor entertained the King of Saxony, his family and his Court, which had returned under the wing of the victor after the victory, and which was well received after making an apology. The principal actors of the Comédie-Française had been sent to headquarters from Paris, and there was a dramatic representation every other day.

The pick of this company was staying, if I remember rightly, in the same *hôtel* in which we lived. We often saw them off the stage, and I knew them nearly all personally. When a very young man, and in the habit of going constantly to the Théâtre Français, I found it more convenient and cheaper, instead of taking my ticket at the door every evening, to take what was called then, and is, I believe, called so still, an 'actor's pass.' That was the right which was given to every member of the company to dispose of, for his own profit, a place in the orchestra or in the balcony. I had bought Dazincourt's passes; he was a comedian of the old school, a clever and well-educated man, who used to tell me anecdotes of the *ancien régime*, and had introduced me to several of his brother actors. Later, having made the acquaintance of the celebrated painter Gérard, I had met, at the delightful *soirées* which he used to give to the best men in society and amongst artists whom it was possible to gather together—I had, I say, met the principal *coryphées* of our different theatres. And then, if it must be said, I took advantage of M. de Narbonne's presence. Before the Revolution he had been on most intimate terms with Mademoiselle Constat, by whom he had a daughter, who went on the stage under the name

of Amalric Constat ; but she remained on it only for a very short time, as by her irreproachable conduct she well deserved to make an honourable marriage. M. de Narbonne never made mother and daughter known to each other. Mademoiselle Constat, who had at that time retired from the theatre and was married to the nephew of the poet Parny, kept a very good house in town and country, and more than once I have been there with her former associates, from whom she had finally separated herself.

Thus the five weeks passed by rapidly, and all the more so as there was no lack of political incident. M. Thiers has very well related the different stratagems which the Emperor Napoleon employed to obtain an extension of the armistice, by leading his enemies to hope for peace. He has related the celebrated interview of June 28, on the testimony of M. de Metternich himself. This narrative modifies, in more than one respect, the violence and passion which public report attributes to the crowned interlocutor.

No doubt M. de Metternich is to be believed in the matter ; but I am bound to say that, on the day itself, and on the next and following days, the report to which I have alluded was very fully believed by those who were best informed and in the closest connection with

the Emperor, and that certainly that dangerous expression, '*How much has England given you ?*' has never been denied by anyone. I will add, from memory, that the indifference which the Emperor, according to M. de Metternich, evinced respecting the losses of Germany during the Russian campaign, had been expressed, a few days before, with much more original simplicity—'*All told,*' he said to M. de Narbonne, who repeated his words to me the same evening, '*what has it all cost me? Three hundred thousand men, and then there were a lot of Germans amongst them.*'

At last, July 15, after much coming and going, and numberless tergiversations, the Emperor appointed as his plenipotentiaries at the Congress—which was to be opened immediately at Prague, and which was to close by August 16 at the latest, as this was the date of the last extension of the armistice—M. de Narbonne and M. de Caulaincourt. M. de Narbonne was to take with him the two secretaries of the embassy at Warsaw, Lajard and Rumigny, and two attachés, M. de Montigny and me; M. de Caulaincourt took with him his first secretary of the embassy at St. Petersburg, M. de Rayneval, who has since been ambassador to Spain.

M. de Narbonne started]directly, but M. de Caulaincourt was detained for several days, under a miserable

pretext. The Russian and Prussian plenipotentiaries had arrived at Prague by July 11. M. de Narbonne received his full powers and his authorization to proceed to an interchange of credentials before the arrival of his colleague.

The first and last difficulty, which broke up the Congress, arose on the subject of the exchange of powers: the French plenipotentiaries insisted upon the exchange of powers taking place at the Conference; the Russian and Prussian plenipotentiaries took refuge behind the mediator.*

In the meantime, I carefully visited all that was worth seeing in the capital of Bohemia: the old and the new town, the Kleinstadt, the Hradschin, where, later on, Charles X. and his family found their last refuge; the library, the museum, and the observatory, Tycho Brahe's last retreat. Many a time did I seat myself on the bastion which, in 1741, my grandfather, then but twenty-three years old, had scaled, side by side with the grenadiers of M. de Chevert.

It is not my intention to give an account of the Congress of Prague here; for all that concerned the embassy of Vienna, I refer my readers to the account of M. Thiers. It is, besides, well known that this

* Austria was here the mediator.

so-called Congress was only opened *pro formâ*, that it only lasted twenty days, that these twenty days were spent in preliminary disputes, and that the plenipotentiaries never really met face to face.

I think I was about the only one, on our side or on the other, who did not lose his time. Our two plenipotentiaries had commissioned me to draw up an exact statement of the actual forces which the Austrian Government had got together to back up its mediation ; and I performed the work actively, and, I believe, successfully. The means which may be resorted to in order to get at the secret of a man who, strictly speaking, is not one's friend, are never altogether blameless ; those we employed were certainly not so, and, as regards the share I took in them, I confess it to my shame. As a matter of fact, we managed to obtain information from the different Austrian public offices ; we got possession of the muster-rolls, corps by corps, regiment by regiment, man by man ; and in many cases we even managed to obtain, not merely copies, but the originals themselves. By means of those documents, I drew up a report of the war-strength of the Austrian army, the accuracy of which was afterwards proved by future events, and, to such an extent, that it since occurred to me that M. de Metternich,

being informed of our schemes, tacitly favoured them, being only too well pleased thus, and through us, to bring pressure to bear upon the Emperor.

However this may be, that report (of which I have preserved a copy, together with the documents on which it was based) was thoroughly approved of by our two plenipotentiaries on being submitted to them; I discussed every point of it with them, and explained the whole, and every detail of it, so much to their satisfaction, that they instructed me to proceed to Dresden at once, to deliver my report to the Emperor, and thus lay before him, so to speak, the palpable evidence of the enormous preparations which were being accumulated against him.

I started, and lost no time on the way. On arriving at Dresden, I called on M. de Bassano, and showed him my report, explaining it to him, and asking him at the same time, on behalf of M. de Narbonne and of M. de Caulaincourt, to bring it under the notice of the Emperor, and to inform me in case the latter should require any explanations.

M. de Bassano promised to comply with my request.

He was dismayed, for he could neither refuse to believe the evidence of the figures, nor the authenticity

of the documents from which these figures were taken ; so he told me to wait, which I did.

Having kept me waiting for a long time, M. de Bassano returned at length. He was radiant with joy. After a slight rebuke, the Emperor had convinced him that our figures were a myth, and we idiots.

I insisted that I was right ; he persisted the contrary, but I held to my opinion.

‘My dear friend,’ he said to me at last, ‘the Emperor knows more about this matter, as he does about all others, than you and I, or all the rest of us put together ; and for me, his opinion is like a track laid down in marble, on which I can walk in safety without danger of losing my way.’

I still waited, but the Emperor did not send for me. He, however, kept the paper I had had delivered to him, and I think that, after all, he found it rather more correct than he hoped for ; at any rate, he was not long in discovering the real state of affairs.

In the evening, before starting on my return journey, I had a tolerably long interview with the private secretary of M. de Bassano, who told me, unaffectedly, that the Emperor would consent to peace only on his own terms, and after having conquered all his enemies.

‘If he gave up even the most insignificant place,’ my

informant added, 'or were to retrace a single step, he would have to reckon with the Corps Législatif.'

My interlocutor, whom I knew well, repeated this to me several times, like a schoolboy repeating his lesson; and he was hardly the man to have invented the phrase himself. He must, therefore, have had it from his chief, who, for his part, was too infatuated with regard to the Emperor for such an apprehension to spring from him. The fear, therefore, must have come from the Emperor himself. M. de Caulaincourt, to whom I related this on my return, did not doubt it any more than I did.

The few days which remained, before reaching the fatal term, passed quickly in useless negotiations. During this short interval, Fouché, then Duke of Otranto, arrived at Prague. The Emperor had summoned him to Dresden from Paris, no doubt to cut short any intrigues upon which he might have entered; and from Dresden he had sent him into Illyria, to replace the Duke of Abrantés, who had gone quite mad. Had the negotiations of Prague been meant in real earnest, it would have been a decidedly clumsy proceeding, at such a moment, to nominate a Governor-General to that very Illyria which was being ostensibly offered to Austria; but at the stage at which we were then, everything lost its importance. The Duke of

Otranto remained with us for three days, had an interview with M. de Metternich, and talked nonsense to him. He *spoke* a great deal with us, but did not *say* much; as for his appearance, it did not make up for the hollowness of his conversation. His actions were certainly borne out by his disagreeable looks, which put one in mind of a low blackguard; and no one could possibly have guessed that, one day, he would become Minister of the *Most Christian King*.

At last the fatal day arrived when the armistice expired, when all hopes of coming to terms were over, and when Austria, the mediator, became one of the belligerents. We got ready to take our departure, the more so as our position was hardly tenable any longer. We could not pass through the streets without being insulted; the theatres resounded with applause at the jokes which cast outrage and derision on France, and movable stages were erected so that the pieces might be played under our very windows.

On the eve of our departure, M. de Narbonne instructed me to call on M. de Metternich, in order to settle with the latter all the formalities relating to passports, escorts, safe-conducts, etc. I drove to M. de Metternich's at nightfall, so as to avoid any unpleasant adventure. In order to reach the study of

the Prince, I had to pass through a number of rooms crowded with generals and other officers of all ranks, and with employés of every class and kind.

Whilst passing through this crowd of uniforms and of embroidered coats, I was not altogether free from apprehension ; for I feared that I might hear some remark or other which it would be equally difficult for me either to notice or to pass over in silence. M. de Metternich had, I think, something of the same feeling, for he came to meet me, took me by the arm, and led me rapidly into his study.

The small amount of business we had to transact was settled in a few minutes, but he made me sit down near his desk and detained me for nearly an hour.

It would be incorrect to say that we talked together, for he was almost exclusively the only one to speak ; his eyes were moist, his hands worked nervously, and his forehead was covered with perspiration. He explained to me in detail the designs he had formed, and the efforts he had made since the day of our disasters to preserve peace, to maintain the alliance between Austria and France, and to reconcile the interests of his own country, and the legitimate independence of Germany, with the pride and the real interests of France. He called to mind the attacks to which he

had been subjected, the reproaches he had endured, and the efforts he had made, making me, in a measure, a witness of the extremities to which he was now reduced.

He then enumerated to me fully the whole military force which was arrayed against us, hastening, however, to add that no one knew better than himself how formidable the Emperor Napoleon was, and that no one had the least illusions as to the risks which Austria was ready to run. He explained to me the preparations which had already been made for the evacuation of Vienna, and the dispositions which had been taken to continue the struggle, even though it were after another Austerlitz or another Wagram.

The only right I had to all these confidential communications, was the confidence with which the two plenipotentiaries honoured me; but, strictly speaking, all these explanations were not addressed to me, but to the whole embassy; I was only the accidental depository of a testament *in extremis*; or, I had better say, it was the effusion of a soul, full of patriotic and personal anguish, which poured out its innermost feelings even to overflowing, without being able to restrain them.

I took my leave of the Prince with a full heart.

My mind was assailed with gloomy thoughts, and I was filled with an emotion which sprang from various causes. I hardly remarked, as I went through the palace, that the rooms were empty, nor, as I drove through the town, that the streets were deserted; everything was calm and dismal, and foreboding the approaching storm.

‘Il succède à ce bruit un calme plein d’horreur,
Et la terre, en silence, attend dans la terreur.’

We left Prague the next morning, whilst M. de Caulaincourt, who was supposed to be going to follow us very soon, remained behind. M. de Narbonne was not aware of the fact that since August 8, the day but one before the declaration of war, and three days before hostilities recommenced, his colleague had been carrying on with M. de Metternich a sort of secret negotiation, which had no better success than the public negotiations, and which did not come to an end until the 17th of the same month. M. Lefebvre and M. Thiers recently disclosed the existence and the various incidents of this negotiation.

It must have been very painful for M. de Caulaincourt, honest and loyal to his colleagues as he naturally was, to lend himself to the duplicity of his master in this matter. I am quite sure that he did it from a

sense of fidelity and of patriotism, rightly or wrongly understood, but I am equally sure that the Emperor would never have proposed such a thing to M. de Narbonne, any more than he would have implicated him, without his knowing it, in the arrest of the Duc d'Enghien.

M. de Caulaincourt was a man of honour, his mind was sound and upright, though rather narrow ; his character was sincere and firm to a certain extent, but not sufficiently so to urge him to make every sacrifice.

This was the misfortune of his life, and this misfortune weighs upon his memory.

On our return to Dresden, my colleagues and I all had orders to return to France immediately. I took leave of M. de Narbonne, never to see him again. He had no presentiment of this, nor had I. I cannot say whether the command of Torgau, which was entrusted to him, was intended as a favour or a disgrace ; at any rate, he succumbed there, if not in the full vigour of his age, yet certainly in the fulness of all his faculties. No general officer, young soldier, or veteran, supported the retreat from Moscow with more courage and gaiety than this nobleman born and reared at the Court of Louis XV. In him the Emperor had a councillor who was both more able and more faithful than M. de

Talleyrand and more far-sighted and determined than M. de Caulaincourt. For his own sake, it is not to be regretted that he was not alive at the fall of the Empire ; he would neither have betrayed it in its reverses, nor deserted it in its last moments, and his position, at the restoration of the Bourbons, would have been very painful and unpleasant. No one knew better than I did what inexhaustible kindness, natural generosity and sincere affection, or what clearness and strength of mind, he possessed under the outward charms and light-heartedness of a man of the world, and no one regretted him more bitterly than I did.

On my way back to France I met, at Hanau, two officers attached to the Emperor's household, M. de Mesgrigny, one of his equerries, and M. de Bausset, the *sous-préfet* of the palace, and we had a more jovial supper together than we ought to have had. They congratulated me on my return to France, and jested about the unpleasantness of having to go through another campaign. I could not get them to enter upon any serious topic. I do not know how they got out of the disaster at Leipzig ; all I do know is that neither of them left his bones there.

On my arrival in Paris, as soon as I had seen my family, I put myself at the disposal of the High

Chancellor, and requested to be allowed to re-enter the ordinary service of the Conseil d'État. He received my very modest demand favourably, but he had other things to think about.

I spent in Paris the months of September and October, and as a relief from the terrible preoccupation of war, and the dreadful news which every mail brought, chance led me into the path of philosophy again.

It was at the period when the crusade against the philosophy of the eighteenth century was beginning. M. Laromiguière, one of its most ardent adepts, and one of its best disciples, had given it the first blow. Whilst flattering himself that he was putting it beyond the reach of any attack, by means of ingenious subtilties, he had really opened a breach, through which M. Royer-Collard mounted bravely, with the flag of Scotch philosophy in his hand, and which he even widened.

M. Desrenaudé, whom I met again in Paris, asked me to be present at this duel, which kept all the students on the alert. He took me with him to M. Laromiguière's course of lectures, and I do not know why I did not go to that of M. Royer-Collard, but it was not from any premeditated intention.

M. Laromiguière lectured with extraordinary lucidity

and much charm. He was very witty and most captivating. He was very fond of arguing points with his audience at the end of the lecture. M. Desrenaudé was a friend of his, and so I made his acquaintance, and often went to see him in his philosophical retreat. By degrees the two friends admitted me to a closer intimacy. It was their custom, during the fine weather, to start for a walk in one of the environs of Paris once or twice a week, at about three or four o'clock in the afternoon, and to go and dine at some small country inn. They generally went with some other friends: Garat, Daunou, Ginguené, and generally the dinner lasted a considerable time, and philosophy, literature, and occasionally even politics were freely discussed. I was present at the warm disputes between Garat and Laromiguière. The one was the ardent supporter of the system of Condillac, pure and simple; the other delicately introduced his own restrictions. Of course I was on the side of Laromiguière; he was right a thousand times over, though he was only half right. Garat was supercilious, imperious, and irascible, and was particularly distasteful to me, and, moreover, I had a ground for ill-will against him. About ten years before, when I had hardly entered society, I was present at the reception of the poet Parny at the

French Academy, which then used to meet in the Louvre between the two gates which open on to the Carrousel, and where, since, the Orangerie has been erected. Garat received Parny into the Academy, and it was with inexpressible disgust that I heard him praise the infamous poem which disgraces the works of the new member. He, however, was wanting neither in integrity nor in cleverness. I got to know him better rather later; but I always preserved my first impressions of him.

I had occasion, at one of the dinners, to make use of the instruction I had had from good old Prince Czartoryski.

‘You have just come from Germany,’ one of the guests said to me suddenly; I think it was Ginguené. ‘There, philosophy just now is making as much noise as the cannon; or rather, it is philosophy which is discharging the guns, raising up the schools against us, and enlisting the scholars. What does that philosophy teach? Is it the same which M. Villers explained to us some years ago, and of which we understood very little?’

‘I recently read,’ Garat added, ‘a big book of Kant’s, translated into Latin, of which I did not understand anything at all. Is that also German philosophy?’

I answered this appeal modestly, explaining as well as I could the ideas which form the basis of Kant's philosophy, the objections which it had encountered, and the changes which it had undergone at the hands of Fichte; and thus I gained some little credit, at very little trouble. Of course all that I explained was looked upon as very absurd; and, as far as I am concerned, that was about my own opinion.

Our dinners generally finished up with some remarks on the news of the day. All the guests except myself were terrified at the approach of a counter-revolution; they were men of 1789, subjugated without being overcome by the imperial *régime*, and they feared the return of the Bourbons above everything. As for me, I did not think enough about the matter to preoccupy myself with it, either in a favourable or another sense.

The Emperor, defeated and a fugitive, returned to Paris on November 7, and on the 14th received all the high dignitaries of State at the Tuileries. For the second time within a year he had lost an army of 500,000 men; but for him the question was to raise a third one.

Faithful to my design to speak only of myself, of what I did and saw, I shall say nothing of the events which brought about the fall of the Empire or of the

intrigues which preceded it; of the quarrels of the Emperor with the Corps Législatif, of his negotiations, whether real or not, with the foreign Powers; of the bravery displayed in the campaign in France; of the fidelity of some of his servants, and of the defection of others. I shall say nothing, because personally I knew nothing about it; because to this day I know nothing more than what I have read or heard. I will merely say that in the two months which preceded the new and last departure of the Emperor for the army, official society, and even unofficial society, was divided between two *salons*—that of M. de Bassano, who had again become Secretary of State, giving up foreign affairs to M. de Caulaincourt; and that of M. de Talleyrand, who, though still in disgrace, was nevertheless on his legs as a grand dignitary of the Empire.

These two sets mutually laughed at and denounced each other. In the second, peace was clamoured for at any price; in the first, they still reckoned on some miracle of management on the part of the Emperor. In the second was foreseen, silently, but with some satisfaction, the definite fall of the Empire; in the other its maintenance was passionately wished for.

I was in the habit of mixing with both sets about equally, and I must confess that I was rather on the side

of those who desired, without hoping for it too much, the maintenance of the Empire, such as it was. I could not look calmly on the disasters of our army, if we still had one; and the sight of those men, who, after having served, flattered, encouraged, supported the Emperor in all his follies and in all his crimes, now, at his overthrow, inveighed against him, inspired me with profound disgust.

However, nothing was yet decided, nothing was indeed yet clear, and the year 1813 was closing in profound and sinister darkness.

BOOK III.

THIRD PERIOD.

1814—1817.



I.

1814.

DURING the night between December 31, 1813, and January 1, 1814, the allies, after much hesitation, crossed the Rhine between Spires and Bâle.

On January 24 the Emperor started for the army.

On March 31 Paris capitulated.

On April 2 the Senate declared the crown forfeited.

Napoleon abdicated on April 11.

Louis XVIII., recalled to the throne, returned to France on the 29th.

On May 2 he laid down the principles of the Charter in the Declaration of St. Ouen.

On May 30 he opened the two Chambers.

I witnessed these events, only as a simple spectator, without taking part in any of them ; and as such, here, in a few words, is what I saw.

I did not hear the name of the Princes of the House of Bourbon pronounced till we heard the report of the progress of the allies, and in measure as their progress increased. I need not say that I was quite a stranger to the views which their partisans, as it was said, held, and which, for my part, I doubt very much ; but in the houses which I was in the habit of frequenting, and where, besides, people's minds were much divided, it was impossible that the chances of the future should not be discussed. The Restoration came in for a very small share of it ; and, strange to say, in Paris nothing was known either of the entry of the Comte d'Artois into Franche-Comté or of the arrival of the Duc d'Angoulême in the south. I remember very well, for example, the discussions of which the *salon* of Madame de Jaucourt was the scene, and which were prolonged far into the morning. M. de Jaucourt, although he was a Senator and attached to King Joseph, was certainly deep in the confidence of M. de Talleyrand, seeing that he became a member of the Provisional Government. Even there, at his house, in his presence, hardly anything was discussed except the alternative of

peace or a regency, and people were mostly inclined to believe in peace. I can still hear M. de Damas, a former *émigré*, who had returned a long time ago, but who had remained an *émigré* to his very finger tips, exhausting himself in arguments to justify, as well as he could, the strategy of the allies, and maintaining against everyone that they would arrive at Paris; but even on this supposition he did not speak of the Bourbons.

But if in the higher classes men's opinions were still uncertain and very circumspect, the public discontent made itself evident, and with curious anxiety I followed its first manifestations. I shall never forget the evening when, sitting quietly at the Opéra Comique to see the representation of the 'Tableau Parlant,' an old production of Marmontel and of Grétry, at the moment that this anetta was being sung :

' Vous étiez ce que vous n'êtes plus,
 . Vous n'étiez pas ce que vous êtes. . . '

the applause burst forth from all sides, from pit to gallery, and was renewed over and over again. Still less shall I forget another scene, which I witnessed two days later. I was at the Vaudeville. The police had given orders for the performance there of an appropriate play, in which Cossacks plundered a village,

pursued young girls, and set fire to the barns : the piece was outrageously hissed from the very beginning, interrupted by the noise from the pit, and could not be terminated.

What did the public wish for when they gave way to such ardent demonstrations ? They did not know themselves : they were not thinking of the Bourbons ; they were not wishing for the allies, nor dreaming of the Regency—but it was a mere ebullition of rage, let what might happen.

One gets accustomed to everything. The alternating successes and reverses during the short campaign in France had so unhinged men's minds and upset their conjectures, that, on the day when they learnt the approach of the allies, nobody would believe it ; and only the roar of the guns, and the sight of the peasants who were taking refuge in the suburbs with their families, their cattle and their furniture, could overcome the general incredulity.

The next day I got up at daybreak, and woke my neighbour, M. de Norvins. We had made an appointment, and we went briskly up the boulevard and the streets which lead to the Barrière de Clichy. Driven back by the soldiers who were guarding that barrier, we followed the Custom-house wall as far as the barrier

of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Turned away again, and not without reason, by the National Guard and the soldiers, we heard the cannonade and the musketry fire approaching nearer and nearer. We then went down the boulevard, where the crowd was beginning to increase; and, without obstacle, we reached the height of Mousseaux. From there we could very distinctly see the forces of the allied army deploying, and some sharp-shooters, who had advanced beyond the barriers, we saw engage in slight skirmishes, which, as they were out of range, were of no consequence. Nobody seemed to be in command in Paris; the National Guard were without muskets, and no measure was taken to urge the inhabitants to resistance.

On our return to the boulevards, between the Madeleine and the Rue Montmartre, it seemed to us as if the character of the crowd had altered; it was no longer a frightened mass of people belonging to all conditions of life, but it consisted almost entirely of well-dressed people, and of women in elegant *negligé*; it was almost like a public promenade. The shops, which at first had been carefully closed, half opened again; the restaurants were filled with men and women, snatching a hasty breakfast. The noise of the fight was heard very clearly; and it was even said that

some shells fell into the adjacent streets, but I do not believe it. The reports which were spread were, as may be believed, of very various and very contradictory character ; nobody believed anything, and everybody was expecting everything.

At nightfall we returned home. At that time I was still living in the Rue de la Madeleine. On the way, I stopped for a few moments at the Duchess d'Abrantès' in the Rue des Champs-Élysées, and there I met General Kellerman, whom I had not seen since he was at Valladolid. He was relating the engagement of that morning and the negotiations which had been entered upon, and he spoke of the approaching capitulation, the departure of the Empress-Regent, of the Ministers and the whole Government. Not being able to do anything further for my unhappy country, I resolved, at least, not to be present at the occupation of Paris by the enemy ; and so I kept within doors at home, and I saw neither the gloomy sight of the march of the allied troops along our boulevards, nor the disgraceful scenes which marked their entry.

I did not go out for several days, till our fate was fixed—till the authorities of the Empire had disposed of the Crown, had transferred our allegiance from one Government to another, and prepared a fresh future for France.

I saw some of the persons who were engaged in these transactions, without envying them. The Comte d'Artois had just arrived ; it was a case of who could be presented to him first. The old Royalists hastened from the four corners of France, and the servants of the Empire rushed to be beforehand with them. I was urged to do the same, and not to neglect to take that part in the Restoration which my name might be worth to me ; the more so, as having hitherto been in a very obscure position, my conduct required no apology. But everything that I saw inspired me with profound disgust, and appeared rather ridiculous to me. However, one morning, I could not resist the wish to go *incognito*, that is to say, not in uniform and without being announced, into the lower hall of the Pavillon de Flore, where the Comte d'Artois was distributing smiles and compliments to all comers. I went in very quietly, without being noticed by anyone, and I went out in the same way. I was told that M. de la Fayette had presented himself the same morning from patriotic motives ; no others could possibly be attributed to him ; that, dressed in his old uniform of a general officer, he had been taken for a former *émigré*, and as such had been received with open arms ; and that, having stated his name, the Comte d'Artois stood,

aghast, and without saying a word, amidst the indignant and dismayed audience. I do not know whether the anecdote is true ; for M. de la Fayette never mentioned it to me, and I cannot conceive why I never spoke to him about it myself.

Then came the entry of Louis XVIII., surrounded by his family, and escorted by the marshals and generals of the Empire. I was present at the progress of the cortége, merely as a curious spectator, and I followed it from street to street, from boulevard to boulevard, as far as the Tuileries ; I do not think that I am deceiving myself when I say that the crowd was composed of two quite different elements ; the one, by far the most considerable of the two, was formed of persons like myself, curious, sad, and resigned ; the other was composed of ardent loyalists, limited in number, but noisy and demonstrative : these two classes, according to the quarter where the procession was, increased or decreased more or less, but were quite distinct ; the latter predominated on approaching the Tuileries.

Louis XVIII., driving in an open carriage with his family, had a frank and serious look, without any apparent emotion ; the Duchess d'Angoulême, that grave and somewhat morose air which she always wore.

M. de Chateaubriand has written some verses on the fierce and sinister aspect of the troops before whom the procession passed ; but I observed them closely, and nothing of that struck me, nor did I remark anything to fix my attention. The generals on horseback around the carriage were visibly agitated and unquiet. I returned home, only half satisfied and in a thoroughly perplexed frame of mind.

From that moment, until the promulgation of the charter, I followed the march and the progress of the new Government, yet without making any overtures to it ; indeed, I kept myself at a distance from those persons of my family or of my acquaintance who were pledging themselves more and more to it. Nevertheless, I was kept thoroughly informed of the progress of the committee which was charged with the duty of drawing up the charter, and that through a very singular circumstance.

I have spoken of my excellent friend and comrade, Pépin de Bellisle. He had returned to France when our army definitely evacuated Spain, and I had met him in Paris again when I myself returned from Prague. I saw a great deal of him. As he had been brought up from his earliest youth by M. and Madame Beugnot, and was almost like a child of the house, he

introduced me there. M. Beugnot, who was then Minister, *ad interim*, of the Provisional Government, was secretary to the committee entrusted with the draft of the new Constitution. Bellisle and I went to his house nearly every evening. He regularly told us what had taken place at the sitting of the morning; and we remained discussing the subject till far into the night. We found fault with him when he slackened in his defence of constitutional principles, and if, as I think is the case, he had some influence in the adoption of certain contested arrangements, we, perhaps, had something slightly to do with it.

M. Beugnot, who was born at Troyes, in Champagne, in an honourable but modest condition of life, was called to the bar at an early age; later, in the Assemblée Législative, he was a member of that courageous minority which did honour to the assembly, and was imprisoned under the Terror; under the Empire he became successively *préfet* of Rouen, Conseiller d'État, and administrator of the kingdom of Westphalia, and was certainly a very upright and enlightened man. His views were broad, simple, and sagacious, his attainments varied, and his conversation delightful. He had seen many men and many things; he had observed what he saw, and his memory was in-

fallible. But he had not altogether escaped the fatal effect of the successive revolutions whose crowning was the imperial government; his spirit was not on a par with his culture; he had not got enough backbone; in a word, he belonged more or less to the race of functionaries.

For all that, however, he did not, in the drawing up of the charter, gain the upper hand as much as from the superiority of his intellect, and his experience, might naturally have been expected. Amongst the provisions which he allowed to pass, with but little resistance, was one which affected my friend Bellisle and myself very closely, namely, that which fixed the age at which deputies could be elected members of the Chamber at forty years. That provision condemned us to more than ten years of political inactivity, and we reproached M. Beugnot bitterly for it, a reproach which he repelled, as usually, rather weakly. By this it will be seen that I personally was far from expecting the recompense which awaited me. I had totally forgotten that I was the head of the elder branch of my family, and heir to the duchy of Broglie, and that as such, since the creation of a Chamber of Peers was contemplated, I should naturally be summoned to it.

Fortunately, others thought of it for me ; my uncle Prince Amédée de Broglie, who as a former aide-de-camp of the Prince of Condé might easily have caused the balance to weigh in his favour, on the contrary, without my knowledge, asserted my rights, with much zeal and disinterestedness. Besides that, the flood of the Restoration was in my favour without it being necessary for me to take any steps in the matter. I was, however, much surprised at receiving, on the very morning of June 4th, the writ summoning the future Chamber of Peers, which was composed of former senators and noblemen, to the halls of the Palais Bourbon, where the Chamber of Deputies was sitting.

The sitting was imposing, solemn, and, taken as a whole, satisfactory. The King's speech, which was grave and dignified, compensated, in a certain measure, for the regret caused by the expressions, 'the charter which has been granted' (*la Charte octroyée*) 'the nineteen years of our reign' (*les dix neuf années de notre règne*)—for the anomalous speech of Chancellor Dambray, and the weeding out of a certain number of senators, about whom the public, by the way, cared but very little.

I was thus transported, all of a sudden, by the mere course of events, to the highest rank in society and in

the State. I had not deserved it by my services, neither had I rendered myself unworthy of it by my sentiments, my language, or my conduct. All that I had to do was to make good use of this unexpected good fortune.

I was twenty-nine years old, and for the last ten, had disposed freely both of my time and of my modest patrimony. The way in which I had made use of both was not of a nature to make it difficult for me to find a suitable partner in life. I had passed half of the ten years in France, in what is called society, the other half in foreign countries, where I was engaged in public business. I had acquired a certain amount of experience of men and things, and the course of my studies had prepared me for public life, at least as much as the greater part of my contemporaries.

The sentiments by which I was animated on entering public life were of the highest. My views were sound, my intentions upright, my opinions sensible. Without despising or disparaging the *ancien régime*, any attempt to restore it appeared to me puerile. From my heart, and from conviction, I belonged to the new state of society, and I very sincerely believed in its indefinite progress; whilst detesting a revolutionary state of affairs—the disorders which it brings with it,

and the crimes which sully it—I looked upon the French Revolution, taken as a whole, as an inevitable and salutary crisis. In politics, I regarded the government of the United States as the future of civilized nations, and the English monarchy as the government of the present; I hated despotism, and saw in the administrative monarchy nothing but a period of transition. In all this, there was no doubt a good deal of youthful fancy, and a little dreaming, but nothing radically wrong, nothing which time and reflection could not have set right, nothing which was not compatible with loyalty and honour.

I had employed the leisure afforded me by the death-struggle of the imperial *régime* to commit to writing my views on different political questions. At the end of one of these essays, to which, however, I attach no importance, I find the following passage :

‘Montesquieu, carried away by his love for his country, has often allowed the correctness of his judgment to yield, in order to represent to the French their government as one of the three types on which all others should be modelled. Mably did not disguise the fact that he held a totally different opinion. It is well known that he said one day, angrily, when some reforms were mentioned : “ *So much the worse, for that*

will preserve the old machine which ought to be destroyed." Montesquieu's object was reasonable, and it is sad to think that Mably was right.'

These few lines show my state of mind at that period, and the faithfulness of my present recollections.

However, whatever the moderation of my views, and of my character, the mere fact of their being contrary to the prevalent current of ideas and feelings very soon led to my being looked upon by the King and by the highest classes in society as an embryo Jacobin. The behaviour of M. d'Argenson had something to do with this. He had distinctly and sharply refused the post of Royal Commissioner, whose duty it was to install the new *regime*, and to cause it to be acknowledged. But what contributed most to discredit me in high places, was on the one hand the intercourse which I maintained with several of the servants of the imperial *regime*: amongst others with M. de Bassano and M. de Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely; and, on the other, the acquaintance I formed with the members of the two Chambers whose views were similar to mine: Tracy, Lanjuinais, Boissy d'Anglas, Pontécoulant, Malleville, Lenoir, La Roche, in the Chamber of Peers; Dupont (of the Department of the Eure), Gallois, Ganilh, Flaugergues, Raynouard, in the Chamber of Deputies.

I took no part, however, in the debates which marked the first session of the French Parliament, and which chiefly turned on the bill with regard to the Press laws, introduced by the Abbé de Montesquiou ; on the system of finance of the Abbé Louis, who has since become, or rather remained, Baron Louis : on the affair of General Excelmans, and the restitution of the property of the *émigrés*. I might pride myself upon my modesty in those circumstances, and say that as I had no deliberative voice in the Chamber, of which I was a member, it would have been presumption on my part to have spoken only for the sake of being heard : but I prefer to confess freely, that timidity had a good deal to do with my silence, and, as is almost always the case, self-love had itself a good deal to do with my timidity.

Besides that, I had other things to think about, and better reasons to excuse myself.

At this time the great event of my life was drawing near, the event which has decided my fate for this, and, as I hope, for a better world.

Madame de Staël, who had been exiled during ten years by the Emperor, who had with difficulty escaped his tyranny by going all over Europe, from Geneva to Moscow, from Moscow to Stockholm, and who had had

a triumphant reception in England, had returned to France shortly after the advent of Louis XVIII. ; she had come back accompanied by her son, her daughter, M. Rocca, her second husband, and Wilhelm Schlegel, one of the stars of German literature.

She had been very intimate with my mother, as I have already mentioned more than once. Having known her when I was a child, I was easily introduced to her.

Everything has already been said concerning Madame de Staël. Full justice has been paid her ; enlightened men, honest men of all parties, those good and sensible people who are beforehand with posterity, and who prepare its decrees, agree in seeing in the author of so many writings which will live as long as our language, generosity of character, nobility of sentiment, power, breadth and refinement of mind, and a rare diversity of natural gifts as well as of acquired talents, not to mention the incomparable brilliancy of her conversation.

I shall add nothing to this, and, indeed, what could I add ? Madame de Staël has rather harmed the memory of her illustrious father than otherwise, by overwhelming him with well-merited praise, thus inducing the ungrateful and malicious public to say of

him what the Athenian peasant said of Aristides. I will not pay her memory this bad compliment, but I will be satisfied with indicating one particular feature in her character, which alone will suffice to explain many things, and repel many imputations.

What characterised Madame de Staël above all, and more than all, was, on the one hand, an impetuous, imperious, irresistible activity for herself, and on the other, if I may venture to say it, inflexible good sense. In all the transactions of life, whether public or private, in all the preoccupation of her intellect, study or thought, of composition or conversation, her natural genius carried her, or rather carried her off, to her goal at one stretch, at one bound, without regard to difficulties, and exposed her somewhat to exceed the measure of what was actual or possible. She was the first to perceive this, and to be shocked by her mistake. Her wonderful discernment of what is true and real, of what is hidden at the bottom of things or of men's hearts, enlivened her, as it were, with a sudden inspiration, and went through her all at once like a needle. The revulsion was sudden, the reaction complete, as they say in mechanics, in chemistry or in medicine; and very often the disdain of all precautions to cover her retreat, to bring about transitions,

left her at the mercy of the envy which malignant mediocrity feels against superior minds.

I am firmly convinced that, if one were to look into the matter closely, one would find at the bottom of all the faults, real or supposed, and for the most part supposed, which have been rightly or wrongly imputed to Madame de Staël, that what made her existence so stormy, what made her intimate friendship, and even her family life, so passionate, ardent and tumultuous, was this strife between the two eminent qualities by which in turn she was swayed, instead of their tempering and moderating each other. I do not fear to add that this destroyed her health in spite of the natural strength of her constitution, and brought her life to a premature close, in the vigour of her age and the height of her talents.

She received me kindly; she was fond of titles, historic names, liberal views; she hated the Emperor and the imperial *régime*, and she resigned herself to the Restoration without any illusions, without aversion, without prejudice either for or against it, and in these respects I suited her very well.

Soon I saw her nearly every day; I went regularly to her house in the morning or the evening, sometimes

both, either in Paris or at Clichy, where she stayed during the summer.

I became intimate with her son, who was several years younger than I. Educated when quite young at a German gymnasium (high school), then later, under his mother's eyes, by M. Schlegel, he was an excellent scholar, and almost as well versed in the knowledge of antiquity as in the slightest shades and refinements of the classics. He had travelled a great deal, either alone or with his mother, and spoke most modern languages with wonderful ease, and an extremely pure accent. Fitted for anything, he had passed the examinations of the Polytechnic School with distinction, without, however, in the end, entering the school itself. Accomplished, haughty, and generous like his mother, he shared her disgrace, and embraced her hopes with joy and pride. But what most highly distinguished him, and made him a man by himself, was the singular aptitude he had for carrying into execution and practice the speculative ideas of the rare intellects which surrounded his mother. He was, and he remained so all his life, a matter-of-fact man. If his youth, his foreign origin, the Swedish uniform which he still wore, had not prevented his entering the public service in France, and if death had not carried him off too early, I am



*Agree, me suis, & on en a
les sentiments*

A. Aray

W. & A. G. WHEAT, LONDON

convinced that he would have figured in the foremost rank amongst the men of our time.

I shall not speak of his sister; I should find it too difficult to have recourse, in order to express my thoughts, to terms which might seem exaggerated, while they would really be far below the truth. Those who knew her intimately will understand me; as for the others, whatever I might say, they could not do so.

I knew but little of M. Rocca. At the moment when Madame de Staël returned to France, he was suffering from a mortal illness which condemned him to silence—and absolute silence. He was only seen at long intervals. In the few words that I gathered from him, he impressed me as a man of an original, rough, and unaffected mind, which ought to have had something very keen about it.

On the other hand, I knew Wilhelm Schlegel very well, and I shall often have occasion to speak of him. I will wait for the opportunity, and will content myself with saying here that he received me, as did all the rest of the family, with much kindness.

My attentions seeming to be well received, I soon conceived the highest hopes, and, towards the end of the autumn, I started for Ormes, to obtain my mother's consent; that she willingly gave me, and

returned with me to Paris. M. d'Argenson had been the first to advise me to make this marriage, and he followed soon after my mother.

The cordial and ready consent of my mother was necessary for me to be able to withstand the storm which my resolution raised amongst my family. Such was the current of prevailing opinion, and the folly of freshly exhumed noble prejudices, that my marriage with the daughter of a Swedish grandee was looked upon as a *mésalliance*. The opposition between M. Necker and Marshal Broglie in 1789 was brought up, and our families might have been Capulets and Montagues ; my uncle Amédée, to whom I was under real and recent obligations, acted towards me as if I had behaved ungratefully ; in short, the uproar was extreme, and increased hourly.

I remained firm, and the marriage was agreed upon, and made public the very next day after my mother's arrival in Paris, and was only put off because of the arrangement of the settlements, which depended on the restitution of two millions of francs which M. Necker had generously lent the State.

I shall return to this subject later on.

II.

1815.

THE last days of 1814 and the first three months of 1815 passed away with rapidity for me. I used to go to bed late and to be up early; I used to study with avidity during part of the night, and during the best part of the morning, and to do my best in order to become worthy of the position which had fallen to my lot: politics, jurisprudence, political economy, finances, public service, I read all somewhat hastily, and without method. After twelve, I used to spend the rest of the day in the society of Madame de Staël, and at the sittings of the Chambers.

On finding herself once more in her dear Paris, after an exile of ten years, Madame de Staël moved in the very highest society. Seeing that she was welcomed and even sought for at Court, and by Ministers of State, and treated with consideration in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, her *salon* was the meeting-place of all

the foreigners whom the Restoration attracted to Paris. That was not what I most relished in it. In the position in which France was then, all intercourse with foreigners, whoever they may have been, was repugnant to me in a certain degree; so much so, indeed, that, my marriage not being yet public, I congratulated myself upon not being invited, as a member of the family, to the famous interview between the Emperor Alexander and M. de la Fayette, which interview, as everybody knows, had been successfully brought about by Madame de Staël, in her own *salon*. I often regretted afterwards not having witnessed that interview.

Among the foreigners whom I met in that *salon*, the Duke of Wellington, Mr. Canning, Sir James Mackintosh, Lord Harrowby, and M. de Humboldt were the most prominent figures.

Towards the Duke of Wellington I felt much respect, though little sympathy. As regards the chief outlines of his character, he was a regular Englishman—an Englishman of the old stamp. His mind was free from affectation, upright, solid, and cautious, but harsh, stiff, and rather narrow. Besides, his position, as well as his fame, contrasted singularly with the awkward and intrusive gallantry which he affected towards young and handsome ladies, and which, it is said, he used to

carry as far as he was permitted to do. He preserved those manners even until his very old age, and the anxious care with which all parties vied with each other in throwing the veil over the ridiculous side of the character of the hero of Waterloo is one of the chief proofs of the good sense of the English nation.

Very different was Mr. Canning. There were two personages in him—the wit and the statesman ; but those personages somewhat interfered with each other. The wit was most brilliant—perhaps more so than was becoming to the gravity of a future Prime Minister ; but the statesman quite made up for this : he was haughty and scornful. Madame de Staël often used to have lively discussions with the wit as well as with the statesman, and it was a pleasure to hear her ; I, however, used to avoid Mr. Canning more than I sought him ; he was not then the man he afterwards became, and since then I have done him fuller justice.

On the other hand, Sir James Mackintosh was one of the most amiable men I ever knew. His knowledge was immense. He was conversant with classical languages and thoroughly acquainted with German, French, and English literature. He was very like Cicero in character as well as in features. At the time I am speaking of, he was returning from Bombay, where

he had resided several years as Chief Judge, and his high reputation, though long disputed, was beginning to be firmly established in England. During the few months which he spent in Paris, he was a constant visitor to the house of Madame de Staël, where I became acquainted with him. He always treated me with a friendship which lasted until his death. His 'Memoirs,' edited by his family, bear witness to that friendship, of which I have preserved a recollection full of gratitude and veneration.

Lord Harrowby, who, before and after the period of which I am speaking, was for a long time a member of the English Cabinet, was a Tory of enlightened and moderate views, exquisitely polite and of thorough good sense. I was very anxious in my curiosity concerning England. I used to endeavour in vain to reconcile what I used to read in books written *ex professo* respecting that country, and what I used to see daily in the public papers. Lord Harrowby used to gratify my curiosity with untiring kindness. He evinced towards me the interest which elderly persons of consummate experience and kindly disposition naturally feel for novices anxious to learn. I derived great advantage from his conversation, and his friendship towards me remained unaltered through the course of long years,

for he died at a very advanced age. He was still alive and a helpless cripple at the time when I was ambassador in London, and still honoured me with his advice.

Of M. de Humboldt I shall not say much ; everybody knew him in France, where he resided for a great many years. He undoubtedly was, and is still (for he is still alive whilst I am penning these lines) a most extraordinary man, whose erudition extended to every branch of knowledge, whose activity was wonderful, and of whom it may be said that he was acquainted with everybody and with everything. On the other hand, however, he was not a man whose company was altogether safe. He was not free from malice, used to cavil at everybody and everything, was very *meddling*, as the English say, and knew the most trifling gossip of the least important city in the two worlds quite as well as the least secret and the least process of nature. His conversation, though highly instructive, was boring precisely because it was inexhaustible, replete with facts and allusions of every kind, and interspersed with numberless and endless parentheses ; it also became insipid because of the compliments he used to lavish, without rhyme or reason, upon everybody. I have not known his brother, although he was then in Paris,

where he showed himself the decided adversary of France. Everybody agrees that he possessed a mighty intellect and an ardent heart. I regret to be unable to speak of him otherwise than by hearsay.

The three considerable personages amongst Frenchmen whom I usually saw at that time were M. de Chateaubriand, M. de la Fayette, and Benjamin Constant. It would be difficult to mention three others more unlike one another.

M. de Chateaubriand was not then frequenting the *salon* of Madame de Staël. If I remember rightly, it was only in 1817 that he became a constant visitor there ; but we often saw him at the Duchess of Duras', who became, later on, one of his passionate admirers. Madame de Duras was then residing in the Rue de Grenelle, close to the Rue de Bourgogne, and next door to Madame de Staël's. In size and features she was very much like that lady, and did her best in order to make the likeness all the more striking. Her mind was refined and her character noble, but her existence was miserable because of her position being false even in her own eyes. She was the daughter of a *conventionnel*, M. de Kersaint, a Breton nobleman, sincerely Republican, but ardent and too fond of speaking in public, as were then nearly all Republicans. Although

her father could not be reproached with any criminal act, many regrettable speeches of his could be quoted. She was indebted for her cushion at Court to her marriage, and the latter to the chance of emigration. That proved a great drawback to her at the beginning of the Restoration; so much so that her behaviour in the highest society was a perpetual compromise between the pride of her rank and her filial affection. Being of a very feeling heart, she was, unfortunately not without cause, living in constant suspicion of her personal attractions. Her refined and cultured mind was equally anxious for and afraid of the society of literary men, lest her affability should give rise to familiarity on the part of her visitors.

M. de Chateaubriand, like M. de Kersaint, belonged to the Breton nobility. He was as Liberal as he, if not after the same fashion. Being triumphant at the Tuileries, a warm partisan of the Restoration, and the most prominent writer of his day, and, besides, quite taken up with Madame de Duras, it was quite natural that he should take the lead in the society she used to receive. He fulfilled all the conditions necessary to become the ideal of the mistress of the house, who had, long before, felt towards him a deep admiration. Indeed, whilst writing this, it occurs to me that six or

seven years before the Restoration, at a time when the Empire was in full swing, I spent two days at the château of Ussé, where Madame de Duras was then residing with her husband and her two daughters. She then, with an enthusiasm which I sincerely shared, read to me the famous article of the *Mercure*, which almost led to the arrest of its author.

M. de Chateaubriand was, therefore, the most conspicuous visitor at Madame de Duras'. It is worthy of remark that even then—that is, at the very height of his reputation, in the fulness of hope and glory—he already was what we have known him in his days of adversity and decadence: arrogant and scornful, and displaying complacently his individuality, almost cynically naïve, and his envious, bitter, and morose vanity; he was dissatisfied with everything and with everybody, each and all; he already was the man we see in the 'Mémoires d'Outre Tombe.'

I did not often see M. de la Fayette at Madame de Staël's; he used to live on his estate at La Grange, and it was only at intervals that he came to Paris. There I used to visit him at his house. I also used to meet him at M. de Tracy's and at the houses of various friends of his. M. d'Argenson had also renewed with him an intimacy which had been long interrupted. I

loved and admired M. de la Fayette very much ; I heartily shared his sentiments, and that made me rather more Liberal than Madame de Staël would have wished me to be, and gave me in society the reputation of being the enemy of the House of Bourbon. I was not so, for my part ; as for La Fayette, he had not yet changed his allegiance ; indeed, he not only did not have anything to do with the event of the 20th of March—he was not a Bonapartist—but he had no hand whatever in the plot which Fouché, Count d'Erlon, Lefebvre-Desnouettes, and the brothers Lallemand organized in a very different direction from that of the plot of March 20.

Seeing that I do not write history, I do not draw portraits. That of M. de la Fayette has indeed been drawn with a masterly hand by M. Guizot. In my opinion it is faultless, except that the odd mixture of the aristocrat and of the demagogue, so striking in La Fayette, does not perhaps come out in sufficiently broad relief. M. de la Fayette had to be loved for his own sake, which, indeed, required no effort, for one derived no satisfaction from being a true friend to him. He scarcely made any distinction between a respectable man and a rogue, or between a man of sense and a fool ; the only distinction he used to make was between those

who said and those who did not say what he himself used to say. He was a regular prince, surrounded with people who flattered and plundered him. All his fine fortune, so nobly earned, offered, and received, was squandered by the hands of spies and adventurers.

Neither was there any inducement to follow him as a leader; he was ever ready to mix himself in any undertaking, at the bidding of anybody, exactly like noblemen of the good old time, who used to fight for the sake of fighting, for the pleasure afforded them by danger, and to gratify their wish to oblige a friend.

What I say here I told him a hundred times during the course of an intimacy which only closed with his life, and the recollection of which will end only when I die.

As for Benjamin Constant, if one of the men who knew him best, M. de Barante, one of the shrewdest and most sensible men of our time, ever thinks fit to bring to public light the notice he communicated to me, the world will become acquainted with the least *nuances* of that sorry and peculiar character, than which, at the period of which I am speaking, nothing was more curious to study.

Benjamin Constant was then no longer the tribune of 1800, that leader of a growing opposition, almost

at once decapitated with the mighty sabre of the first Consul. Still less was he the Jacobin serving his apprenticeship in the directorial *régime*, professing the necessity of rallying round it, preluding to the 18th Fructidor, and bitterly denouncing the English Restoration.

A voluntary exile of ten years in Germany, and the sight of the ravages wrought by the Emperor Napoleon in that unfortunate country, had completely changed his views. He used to uphold the legitimacy of the rights of the princes, and cursed the usurpation in terms which a Coblenz refugee would not have disowned; he saw no salvation for the people and no hope for liberty, except by the maintenance of the old monarchies and of traditional institutions; every new king was, in his eyes, a usurper, and every usurper a tyrant.

That fit of ultra-Rhenish orthodoxy was not very deep-seated, and therefore did not last long; it, however, had the happy result of inducing him to support sincerely the views and interests of the new Government, and to place at the disposal of the constitutional cause the valuable and wise suggestions and the useful information he had couched in the notes with which his pocket-book was filled; to that task he devoted himself,

and without any after-thought. He it was who truly taught to the new nation the principles of representative government, whilst M. de Chateaubriand taught them to the emigrants and the nobility. Until then the new nation, and even the soundest minds in it, were still sharing the ideas of 1791. The history of the constitution drawn up by the Conservative Senate bears witness to it in that respect. The debt of our country towards Benjamin Constant will never be adequately acknowledged. His various pamphlets enlightened the cleverest men, illumined the general public, and transformed into commonplaces truths which were previously unknown or misunderstood ; that is the first of triumphs in philosophy and in politics.

I collaborated with him in that work, although the assistance I gave him was more of the nature of that given by a journeyman to his employer. I helped him to convey through the technical terms of our legislation the ideas borrowed from British laws, and to tone down the translation. I suggested to him the main outlines of one of his pamphlets—certainly not the best—that which treats of the responsibility of Ministers and other agents of the Executive ; an essay on this subject will be found in my papers ; it had been one of my first works on entering public life.

I also used very often to converse with him about his book upon religions, which he was then editing, but which was published later on. In that respect a great change had also taken place in his mind. He was no longer the sceptic with regard to the future — the runaway pupil, already *blasé* though beardless, wearied of everything before knowing anything ; such, in short, as he appears to us in his pitiable correspondence with Madame de Charrière. He was no longer that partisan of the boldest and most barren doctrines of the philosophy of the last century, that autochthon, if I may use the expression, of the most wrecked of the religions of the heart and mind, preparing to inflict the finishing stroke to the *infamous one*,* to cause the religious traditions of all times and of all countries to destroy and stamp out one another mutually.

In that respect, too, Germany had thoroughly changed his views from white to black, or rather from black to white. German erudition, then in full progress, led him to be ashamed of Holbach, Diderot, and Dupuis. Far from persisting in his hatred and contempt for all religions, he was now rather inclined to

* An allusion to Voltaire's sentence, in which, with reference to religion, he said : 'Ecrasons l'infâme' ('Let us crush the infamous one').

revere them all alike, as containing great truths and leading on the path of many others. He had reversed the plan of his book, and used to say to us laughingly : 'I had collected three or four thousand facts in support of my first thesis ; those facts have turned round about at the word of command, and now attack the opposite side. What an instance of passive obedience !'

In short, from a sceptic he had become a mystic, than which nothing indeed could be more natural. Scepticism is a capital instrument of warfare, or a most convenient pillow for lazy minds ; but, by a thinker, it cannot be used as a shelter from the storm ; it is, on the contrary, a harbour open to all winds ; the mind gets wearied of ever drifting about without aim or purpose, and, through sheer lassitude, mysticism is resorted to as the last refuge of logics at bay.

To this I must add that Benjamin Constant did not limit himself to pure speculation ; practice played also its part, provided it be admitted that mystics may be practical men. He spent his time in Switzerland with Madame de Krudener, then very famous, and who made up for the faults of her youth and the romance of her ripe years by converting the Socinians of Geneva, and ruling, at Lausanne, over a little group of semi-

Catholics more devoted to Madame Guyon than to Calvin ; the latter were, however, very intellectual and witty, and I shall perhaps have the opportunity of speaking of them again later on. In Paris Constant again met Madame de Krudener, who was enjoying the favour of the Emperor Alexander, and acting as the guide of his conscience, and almost as his confessor. He resumed his former intimacy with her, and without assuming the familiarity of authority which his position authorized, without sharing in the least the dream of the holy alliance which was being quietly mooted, he did not altogether keep aloof from the farces that were being played. He thus, for instance, used to spend whole nights in the drawing-room of Madame de Krudener, in the company of many other new converts, sometimes praying on his knees, at other times stretched on the carpet in fits of ecstasy ; all to no purpose, for what he used to ask from God, God sometimes permits in His wrath, but regards with detestation. Being in love with Madame Récamier, who, though already on the turn of life, was still beautiful, Benjamin Constant begged of God to turn the lady's heart in his favour, and as God was turning a deaf ear to his prayers, the lover made up his mind to apply to the devil, which was more natural.

I am not joking ; I relate.

One day, or, rather, one night, Benjamin Constant, Auguste de Staël and I were returning by coach from Angervilliers, a country seat then belonging to Madame de Catellan. The night was dark, the weather stormy, the sky illumined by frequent lightning, and thunder was roaring in the distance ; the gallop of our horses and the wheels of the coach added further to the noise, and frequent sparks from the pavement marked the track followed by the horses. Benjamin Constant chose, or took advantage of, that precise moment to make to us the singular confidence relative to the efforts he had made, thank God in vain, in view of striking a bargain with the enemy of mankind. He, no doubt, intended to make fun of us, but he was, in reality, also making fun of himself, though he did not like to acknowledge it ; his forehead was pale, and a sardonic smile was wandering over his features. He began in the tone of bitter irony so familiar to him ; he gradually turned serious, and, whilst explaining to us the tomfoolery to which he had had to submit, his dreams dispelled almost as soon as they were born, his recital became so expressive and so poignant that, when it closed, neither himself nor any of us were inclined to laugh ; he fell, and we too, I humbly

confess it, into painful reverie, full of anguish. We reached Paris without having exchanged one single word.

I fancy that, retracing afterwards in his work—a book treating of polytheism amongst the Romans—the grievous picture of the superstitions to which progressive and reckless incredulity led the best and most enlightened Greeks and Romans, the descendants of Phocio and of Cicero, Benjamin Constant must have recollected his own past, and that his personal experiences came to the help of his erudition.

At any rate, I was not long discovering that, as far as he was concerned, the *magie noire* had no better success than the *magie blanche*, and that the evil one had also been hard to him.

Indeed, a few days afterwards, I was present at a ball given by M. Greffulhe, the father of the gentlemen of that name, then well known in Parisian society, and of Madame de Castellane. M. Greffulhe was then the owner of a vast and charming residence situated at the top of the Barrière de Clichy. That estate has been since parcelled out, and has become a lonely neighbourhood, in which dirty and tortuous streets have been opened.

The ball I refer to was a masked ball; no one was

admitted to it unless he wore a mask. I myself wore one, like everybody else. I soon noticed that a lady whom I knew well, and who did not disguise her voice, took hold of my arm, left it, and took it again, without, however, having anything to say to me. That lady was Madame Récamier herself. Her game seemed all the more singular to me, that, having known her for many years, having spent whole days, and even whole weeks, with her in the country, I had never been either the admirer of her beauty or the object of those meaningless preferences which she used to lavish upon all men, tall or short, young or old, handsome or ugly, dull or witty; which preferences—truth compels me to say—were quite harmless, and only indulged in in order to keep up her practice in the art of making herself agreeable. Her game, therefore, was not intended for me. She was carrying on an open flirtation with Benjamin Constant on one hand, and with Auguste de Forbin on the other, and made use of me as an instrument. She took pleasure in arousing their respective jealousy by pretending to notice me; as I wore a mask, Benjamin Constant thought I was Forbin, and the latter mistook me for the former; which proves that she little cared for both. I cut short that charitable pastime, which became neither my

position nor my disposition, and could only result in saddling me with two silly quarrels, by leaving the ball before midnight. If I remember rightly, it was on going out that I heard, for the first time, the news of the disembarking of the Emperor at Cannes being whispered about. The Government had learned it that very morning. On the following morning everybody knew it.

Justice compels me to say that, from the very beginning, Madame de Staël saw clearly what it all meant: the rebellion of the troops, the resignation of the country, royalty upset, and the Emperor back to the Tuileries. She listened with most unconcerned incredulity, rather even with a sort of repressed compassion, to the deluge of promises and menaces, of invectives and imprecations, which were being uttered around her; she exhorted everybody to do his duty out of self-respect, for the honour of the cause and of the flag, but without urging anyone to compromise himself, persevering nevertheless in her love for France, although not feeling the slightest confidence in the France of that time.

She, also, made up her mind instantly.

Louis XVIII. had promised to give orders for the two millions generously lent to Louis XVI. by M.

Necker* to be inscribed amongst the debts of the royal family, which were to be paid by France, and certainly that was but strict justice : the money represented a personal debt, which had been spent for the benefit of the State. But that promise fell naturally with the person who had made it. In the foretaste of their triumph, the Bonapartists pressed Madame de Staël not to leave Paris, but to remain and declare herself in favour of the Emperor, promising her no end of fine things in case she complied. I have heard M. de la Valette, who used to live in the same house as Madame de Staël, become more and more pressing in his request as the fatal moment drew nearer ; and Prince de Beauvau, tutor to the King of Rome, warranted that he could obtain anything.

Madame de Staël received these insinuations with the contempt they deserved, and packed up in haste, exhorting me to remain so long as there would be any chance of resisting the new ebb of imperial despotism, and appointing to meet me at Coppet when all such chance should no longer exist.

I remained. Government and society presented a miserable sight. People used to look eagerly for false news without believing a word of it ; they used to

* Madame de Staël was, as we know, the daughter of M. Necker.

wax warm over discussions which no one regarded as serious ; they used to prepare for resistance with the firm resolution of not waiting for the first shock ; they used to swear hatred to the tyrant, and at the same time took the necessary precautions for being favourably treated by him when the time came. Forbin used to drag his big sabre in the drawing-room of Madame Récamier ; and Benjamin Constant used to brandish therein the article which, to his misfortune, he had written in the *Journal des Débats*, although they were both far more preoccupied with the effect they produced on the lady of the house than with anything else. A stupid crowd had gathered at the Tuileries, and shouted ‘*Long live the King !*’ until such time as they should shout ‘*Long live the Emperor !*’ Both Chambers felt as much *dethroned* as royalty itself ; their secret committees were not better protected than the study of the Princes, and their halls were frequented as freely as the *cafés* where people come in quest of intelligence.

The royal sitting, which Louis XVIII. attended to announce his intention of dying on his throne whilst defending his people, produced, however, a favourable impression. It gave rise to the same kind and degree of emotion that a play well performed usually inspires in both actors and audience—a real, though not sincere

emotion, which has not the slightest meaning for anybody. Once the curtain was dropped and the old King had been removed in his armchair, the farce was played and nobody cared about it. The ordinary sittings testified to the general weariness by the absence of all discussion, and the readiness with which the Government obtained all they thought fit to ask. The latter were like those hopeless patients whose slightest wishes may be complied with without making their case either better or worse. In the evening, M. Lainé, President of the Chamber of Deputies, and the only gentleman who, in all this, preserved some dignity, courage, and foresight, used to gather at his house the persons whom he deemed the most resolute and sensible; amongst the latter were the members of the former Committee on the Address in 1813—that address which, in some sort, sounded the death-knell of the Imperial Government; and others too, M. de Sacy, Dupont (of the department of Eure), Benjamin Constant, etc. I used to attend those meetings regularly. As they did not possess any official character, they failed to lead to any useful result, and only ended in idle recriminations.

Amongst the proposals which used to be mooted there, for what they were worth, the only one that had

any sense, and that might have proved somewhat efficacious, was that whose object was to fill the vacancies in the Chamber of Deputies by getting the latter to elect itself its new members, and direct itself to select men whose names were respected and popular. That would, no doubt, have been a *coup d'état*, though a useful and harmless *coup d'état*. However, the proposal failed, owing to the positive refusal of M. de la Fayette and of M. d'Argenson, whose names had been put forward first.

M. de Lally used to play a comedy every evening at those meetings. He used to begin his interminable harangues by shedding torrents of tears over the misfortunes of the House of Bourbon, and wound up by uttering a torrent of insults against each member of the royal family.

I used to spend at home the leisure time left me by the sittings of the Chamber, and the meetings of which I have just spoken, in the company of the young friends whom I had made in the course of the trial of General Excelmans. I mean the editors of the *Censeur Européen*, the most liberal, resolute and disinterested paper which ever honoured our time and our country : I also refer to several of their contributors, amongst whom was already Augustin Thierry, who afterwards acquired for himself a sad though glorious fame.

We often used to stroll together about the streets, squares, and public promenades, mixing with the crowd, and listening to the conversations ; everybody was then dull, calm, and indifferent ; though free from regret or hope, people were not quite devoid of apprehension.

‘My dear,’ the Emperor said, a few days afterwards to M. Mollier, ‘they let me come with the same indifference with which they let the others go.’

That is true, just like the word of Cromwell, who, hearing joyful hurrahs around him, is said to have remarked to Shurloe : ‘Those people would shout still louder and more joyfully if they saw me taken to the scaffold.’

At last the fatal moment came. On the day of the departure of the King I had no occasion to call at the Tuileries. I did not belong to the Court. It would have been impossible for me to feign for those concerned a regret which I really felt, though not exactly for them ; seeing the opinion they very unjustly had of me in those quarters, they might have regarded me as a secret enemy, perhaps even—how do I know ?—as a Bonapartist openly acting the spy. Everything was possible at that time and on the part of such people.

I therefore was satisfied to witness from the out-

side, like the loafers, ill-disguised preparations for a flight ; for, in the official language of the moment, and amidst the protests of which everybody was lavish, the departure looked much more like a flight than like anything else. From the outside and through the windows, it was easy to notice the hurry, the precipitation, and the confusion of the inmates who were hourly expecting to hear the charge of the Imperial Grenadiers. Whilst seeing that little man, whose fame was enhanced by the glory of a hundred victories, leading a handful of old braves, upsetting the frail royal edifice by a touch of his finger, and kicking down the scenery of the play whose performance he thus abruptly cut short, I could not help remembering the scene of Cervantes' work in which the hero of La Mancha enters a booth of marionettes, and seeing a doll dressed up as a princess and bound to a cardboard giant, draws his big sword and cuts in two the dungeon and the prisoners, the showman and his booth.

The day following the departure of the man whom the public let go with the most profound indifference, which day was also that of the arrival of the man whom the public let come with similar unconcern, was still gloomier than the day before. Paris was dismal : the public promenades were deserted, the cafés and other

meeting-places were half closed; people avoided one another in the streets; you only met with belated soldiers, officers enjoying themselves, and privates in a state of ebriety, shouting, yelling the 'Marseillaise'—the eternal burthen of rioters—and offering to everybody, in a jeering tone, and, so to speak, on the point of their sabres, tricolour cockades.

At nightfall the little play was performed before the great one. We saw Saint-Didier, former prefect of the palace, at the head of the imperial flunkeys—footmen, *officiers de bouche*,* cooks, and scullions, each having unearthed his livery—take triumphant possession of the apartments in disorder, of the beds still unmade, of the ranges still smoking, and drive away with broom and skewer those of the royal flunkeys who still remained.

In the dead of night the master arrived. He came like a robber, as the Scriptures term it, than which no expression was ever more fitly applied. He ascended the large staircase of the Tuileries, carried in the arms of his generals, of his ex-Ministers, of all the past and future servants of his fortune, whose faces, however, exhibited as much anxiety as joy.

He had scarcely taken his seat when he heard the words of constitution, liberty, and all the rest of it,

* A pretty French expression, meaning the *chefs*, or head-cooks.

ringing in his ears; he had himself set the example in his proclamations. They were, besides the by-word, the hobby of the time, the jargon of the circumstance. It was a bitter pill for the Emperor, but he readily submitted to swallow it.

During the few days which I spent in Paris, and in the few Bonapartist *salons* which I never ceased to frequent, God knows all the shaking of hands, all the protests and assurances that were lavished on me; it reminded one of the early days of the *Assemblée Constituante*.

I attached to those protests, sincere or affected, only the importance they deserved; they were so many variations on that theme which depicts the time as it was: 'How could I not be a Liberal? I served in the Mamloucks.' Yet they were so many manifestations which rendered a relapse into imperial despotism impossible, at least at first, and prepared the coming ruin of the despot. Such was, indeed, my hope; I even explained my views in that respect one evening, in the *salon* of Madame Gay, in the presence of the literary and public men who, under the first restoration, contributed to the editing of the *Nain Jaune*. I had witnessed the birth of that satirical sheet in the bosom of that society. I had often attended the evening

meetings at which the articles were discussed and decided upon. I was not even quite a stranger to the editing of the paper, in so far that I permitted the jokes and the anecdotes which I used to relate in rather a malignant spirit, I confess, to be published in that paper. I frankly told those present, amongst whom were the future editors of *La Minerve*,* Jouy, Jay, Etienne, and others, that, in my opinion, all hope of making a Constitutional King of Napoleon was folly, as was also all hope of hindering him from rushing into fresh adventures, and from bringing back the foreigners to Paris; that, in my judgment, the only thing to do was to take advantage of the constitutional wind that was blowing, in order to organize a Government which would rid France of the Emperor and prevent a second invasion.

Seeing that the elder branch of the House of Bourbon had fallen, much by its own fault, into great discredit, I pointed out to the younger branch as the sole hope of respectable and sensible people. That was not because I was either acquainted with any plot, or in intimate relations with the Duke of Orleans. I had been introduced to him, and he had received me with kindness; besides, I seldom used to see him, but his

* The name of a Paris newspaper.

position pointed him out naturally as the only suitable person in the circumstances in which we found ourselves. I even recollect now that, two or three days before the arrival of the Emperor, and as I was seeking in my mind for some means of resistance, I started in order to talk about the Duke of Orleans to Carnot, whom I had never seen, and with whom I, therefore, was unacquainted. He was not at home, and I did not take any further steps in the matter.

I hastily left Paris for Ormes, lest it should occur to the constitution-mongers to place my name in that *caput mortuum* of the royal House of Peers which was intended to become the nucleus of the imperial one. This was, however, a groundless apprehension; I even learned, soon afterwards, that my name having been uttered before the Emperor, he had not taken the hint. I then returned to Paris, and found that Benjamin Constant had been raised to the post of Conseiller d'Etat, that he was in favour with the Emperor, and that he was rapidly becoming the nymph Egeria* of the latter and the Solon of France.

He had left Paris on the news of the arrival of the Emperor, and had, I believe, taken refuge at Angers,

* A sarcastic allusion to the nymph who is said to have suggested legal reforms to Numa Pompilius.

as a protection against a proscription which there were reasons for him to fear. He had published a thundering article in the *Journal des Débats*. Since the days of Tacitus and of Juvenal, never had tyranny been thus denounced to public execration.

Having been reassured by his friends, he came back. The Emperor, who was much cleverer than he, who nevertheless was a great deal so, expressed a wish to see him. Benjamin Constant complied, and left the interview as far convinced of the good intentions of the Emperor as he could be convinced of anything, which, in truth, does not mean much.

On entering the vast apartment which he occupied, Rue Saint Honoré, I noticed in the yard a hired carriage waiting for him, and, in the anteroom, a uniform of Conseiller d'Etat spread on a sofa. In the drawing-room Benjamin Constant was conversing with M. de Humboldt; they were reciprocally expounding their respective doctrines. I have some reason to suspect that M. de Humboldt had had something, and even more than something, to do with the conversion of Benjamin Constant; at any rate, on leaving, I saw him laugh in his sleeve and rub his hands by way of expressing his satisfaction.

Benjamin Constant did not enter into any explana-

tions with me. I did not ask him for any. We both accepted the situation as it was : I confined myself to telling him, and again repeating to him, that his honour and reputation would be at stake if he should be lacking in firmness towards the Emperor; that he should not give way on any question of principle, but carefully guard France against the only too probable return of despotism. He assented to all I said ; we examined together the essential points, and agreed on all but that relating to the heredity of the House of Peers. I maintained that an hereditary House of Peers, against which, either by their refusal or by their absence, all the historical names of old France and many of those of new France would protest, could not help falling at once into discredit, and could not pass any good or useful measure. M. de Humboldt supported my argument. We endeavoured together to hit upon some other arrangement, but failed to succeed ; and I fully perceived that everything had already been decided beforehand.

Fairness compels me, however, to confess that Benjamin Constant did not try to make use with me of the seductive powers which only succeeded too well with a man who seemed much more difficult to convince—I mean Sismondi, the historian of the Italian republics: a man of enlightened, liberal, honest, and disinterested

mind; of whom, against all expectation, Benjamin Constant made a Bonapartist of circumstance.

Being the witness of manœuvres which I could not help—being scarcely acquainted with Sismondi, and having, therefore, no right to offer him any advice—I remembered, on that occasion, something which had been told me respecting a comedy or *proverbe* performed a few years before at the theatre at Coppet, and whose singular subject was ‘Temptation in Paradise.’ Benjamin Constant figured in it as the Tempter, and played his part, so I was told, with an art, finish, and go more deserving of admiration than of envy.

Be that as it may, if he succeeded with Sismondi, the harm he did was not very great. Sismondi was a foreigner, member of the Representative Council of Geneva, and fondly attached to his country; had not his noble character preserved him from the attempt, it would have been impossible to enroll him in the service of the Empire. All he could be induced to do was to approve of the Hundred Days—that alone was already too much—and to write a few articles which appeared in the *Moniteur* in defence of the *acte additionnel*; so that his support was rather a manifestation against the Bourbons and the old *régime* than anything else.

That *acte additionnel* at last saw the light; it was

submitted by yea and nay to the sanction of the people, and obtained it as easily as its predecessors had done, and as its successors will do. At the same time, it aroused a reprobation as general as the signatures which were appended to it were numerous. No attention was paid to whatever wise and liberal provisions it contained. It was a new constitution granted ; a new edition, corrected and revised, of the statutes of the Empire. What more could be needed to allay the discontent of a public and of a nation which, alas ! little cares for the reality ?

For my part, I thought it was seriously meant. I found in it many efficacious and sincere provisions, being already imbued with the idea which always struck me, and in accordance with which I have always acted, namely, that in politics we must not dream of the ideal, but tend with energy and perseverance to what is possible. I quickly made up my mind ; I left Paris, the malcontents, the discussions and the worry of the time, and I went to reside at Broglie first, and afterwards at Evreux, in order to secure my election as member of the House of Representatives.

The line of conduct which I intended to adopt was straight and simple. The two Chambers, appointed according to the provisions of the *acte additionnel*,

ought, in my opinion, to lay hold, from the very first, of that measure, good in substance but incomplete, to take advantage of the circumstances in order to enforce its authority, to reform what needed reform, and to prepare for the struggle with the Emperor, in case he should come out victorious over the coalition which was gathering abroad against him ; at the same time, it was indispensable not to refuse him anything which he might judge necessary to the defence of the country, and to abstain from taking the initiative of any personal attack against him. In coming forward as a candidate, I neither paraded nor hid my principles and my intentions. But I was not Bonapartist enough for either the electors of Bernay or of Evreux. The electoral colleges of the Empire, as they existed before the abdication, had been maintained by the *acte additionnel*. I did not suit them, and I was sorry for it, without being surprised. The authorities were less particular. The *préfet* did his very best for me, but then he was my former comrade, Maurice Duval, of whom I shall have occasion to speak later on ; but M. Quinette, one of the regicides, who was at that time imperial *commissaire extraordinaire*, and whom I had never seen, seconded the efforts of the *préfet*, and, as he was entrusted with the duty of filling the vacancies

in the *conseil général* of the department, he appointed me *proprio motu*—a nomination which I very foolishly accepted.

It was not long, in fact, before I found myself placed in the face of a very awkward dilemma. I was asked to take the oath of allegiance. At that time, my ideas about a political oath were not very strict; I thought, just as many good people think when they take the oath nowadays, that a political oath binds the person who takes it to nothing more than not to conspire against the State, not to betray it, and have no communication with its enemies. On these three points I felt perfectly easy; nevertheless, owing to the frame of my mind, the oath was repugnant to me. I gave no answer; I tried in vain to get out of it by letting the matter drop. But at last, when I was brought to the point, I could only make up my mind to take that step by silencing my conscience, and at the present time I am satisfied that my conscience was right and my reasoning was wrong. I now see that to take the oath of allegiance to any Government whatever means to espouse its cause, to put one's hopes in it, to do one's best to sustain it, even at the price of resisting it. In good faith, such were not my feelings towards the Government of the Hundred Days. That is an act of my public life that I

much regret, and of which I cannot think without a feeling of shame.

I returned to Paris after my discomfiture. The barometer stood at 'stormy.' There was no longer any hope of peace ; I will not say no more chance, for there had never been any chance of it. The whole of Europe was preparing to fall upon us. The moment was ill-chosen for quitting one's post.

On June 1, I was present at the Champ de Mai, which took place on the Champ de Mars. I only looked on from a distance, as I dislike crowds, and pomp and parade still more. 'There are,' said Chamfort, 'three things which I hate really and figuratively : noise, wind, and smoke ;' and I am fully of his opinion.

I saw the imperial party pass by in gala dress, with waving plumes, cocked hats, short Spanish cloaks, shoes with large bows, and the rest of it. Such a masquerade, at the approach of such a crisis, when France was on the point of being invaded and divided by the action of these very fine people, inspired me with as much indignation as contempt.

I saw the Guards and several regiments of infantry of the line pass by with a martial air, a proud bearing, but with an anxious look, like men who are quite ready

to play a game for double or quits. As they marched past the Emperor, there was an ardent and yet a sombre look on their faces, and one might almost fancy that the words ‘*Morituri te salutant*’ were about to pass their lips; and the tremendous shouts which they gave by command spoilt the impression without destroying it.

The Emperor’s speech was, no doubt, lofty, telling, and dignified; but it smacked too much of the theatrical hero and of the *parvenu* of glory. What need was there for him to hoist himself on to a stage in order to speak loftily or to boast when he spoke of great events? And then, was it the proper time for this when France, reduced to her former limits by one invasion, was struggling under the blow of a second, and seemed to have no hope of escape except by a miracle? How much more worthy of respect and admiration were the simple words of William III., when he cut the dykes of Holland in the face of the armies of Louis XIV., of Turenne, of Condé, and of Vauban—when he said to those who laughed at his preparations: ‘We can but die in the last ditch.’

William III. conquered neither Italy nor Egypt; he won neither a Marengo nor an Austerlitz; but neither did he twice surrender his country to the foreigner.

He did not, three times in two years, sacrifice five hundred thousand men to his pride; he would have died in the last ditch of Waterloo; no one would ever have seen him playing the part of Themistocles, and begging for a refuge at the Court of the *Grand Monarque*.

During these few terrible days which followed the Champ de Mai and the departure of the Emperor, I scarcely left the Chamber of Representatives. The House of Peers went for nothing; no one attended its sittings. I did not witness the uproar which Marshal Ney caused when he related, perhaps too faithfully, the disaster of which he was *pars magna*, and for which he soon paid with his life; but I witnessed the first appearance of Manuel, and I was fortunate enough to hear Bertrand Barrère discuss seriously, a hundred yards away from the place where the National Convention sat, the advantages and the dangers of an hereditary peerage.

Just about the same time another farce was being played at Saint Denis. The worthy rival of Barrère, Fouché (of Nantes), an ex-member of the Order of Oratorian Friars, commonly called his Excellency the Duke of Otranto, like Barrère, and even more so, if possible, a horrible monster of blood, mud, and bile, was just then consummating his last act of treason—the

least, certainly, of all his many *little sins*—by taking the oath of fidelity to the descendant of Saint Louis, and to the brother of Louis XVI., as his liege lord.

His sponsor in this business was the former Bishop of Autun, who, after he had in succession thrown off his cassock at the fall of the monarchy, his toga at the fall of the Directory, and his coronet as Prince of Benevento at the fall of the Empire, once again had simply become Prince Talleyrand, Prime Minister to his Most Christian Majesty.

I wonder what figure the Most Christian King cut between these two unfrocked ecclesiastics? I have no idea; but I have been told that when seeing them getting into their carriage together, Pozzo di Borgo said to his neighbour, laughing: ‘I should like to hear what those lambs are saying.’

When he took possession of the Tuileries with his Prussians, Blücher drove the Government Commission, of which Fouché was still President, out of the palace. He went into the Luxembourg, wherefrom he drove the Peers, who were deliberating under the presidency of Cambacérès. M. Decazes, who had been reappointed Prefect of Police, took the keys of the Chamber of Representatives, and left the members to break their noses against the iron grating if they liked.

M. de la Fayette tried to force it, and, to that effect, to make it a point of honour for the National Guard to do so, but without avail.

I was present, as a mere spectator, with M. d'Argenson, at this royal 18th of Brumaire, which for the second time put an end to the First Empire, until such time when I should be present as a victim at the imperial 18th of Brumaire, which put an end to the second Republic. During that interval, the Tuileries, the Luxembourg, the Palais Bourbon, were twice carried by '*le populaire*.' I use the classical expression so as to avoid employing any other.

Much has been said against, and much fun has been made of, the Chamber of Representatives. The Emperor himself had set the example by comparing the deputies with the monks of Constantinople, who used to grow hoarse in arguing the point whether there was or not any special light on Mount Thabor, whilst the ram of the enemy was battering the town-gates in; but, frankly speaking, what could that Chamber do?

When it assembled, it found war imminent, and the Emperor on the point of leaving for the front, after having, as dictator, exhausted all the resources which the state of the country was capable of affording him. Could it, then, honourably presume otherwise than that

the war would be successful ; and was not the Chamber therefore obliged to oppose the domination of the victorious despot ?

Let us suppose, however, that it had done otherwise—that it had thrown itself into the arms of the Emperor or grovelled at his feet ;—would that have made him more the victor at Ligny, or less the vanquished the next day ? Would that have given Marshal Ney eyes to see, and to Marshal Grouchy ears to hear ?

Or let us suppose again that, after the precipitate return of the Emperor, the Chamber of Representatives, instead of forcing him to abdicate, had, as the Roman senate did after the disaster of Cannæ, thanked him for not having despaired of his country, and had enthusiastically voted the *levée en masse* of every Frenchman, what advantage would that have been to him ?

On hearing this, neither Wellington nor Blücher would have pushed on to Paris ; they would have waited three or four days till they were joined by the 250,000 Russians and 250,000 Austrians who were crossing the Rhine at that very time, and the Emperor would have found himself under the walls of Paris, with what remained from his army after the Battle of Waterloo, opposed by six or seven hundred thousand victorious

foreigners. Would he have awaited the attack, and set fire to the four corners of the capital? We know that he was no more a Rostopchine than he was a William III., and in 1815 he would have acted precisely as he did in 1814.

No reproaches, that is, no merited reproaches, can be laid to the charge of the Chamber of Representatives for the turn taken by events. No doubt, the attitude of the senators, sitting on their benches as if they were curule chairs, in the face of the barbarians, was, in 1815, more grotesque than sublime; and even more so were the half-dozen of Brutuses and Gracchuses who bawled and gesticulated as in the good old times. But how could that be helped? The good old times were out of fashion. All times, good or bad, must eventually do the same.

‘Sire,’ said Vardes to Louis XIV., on his return from his long exile, and when he saw the frequenters of the *Œil-de-bœuf* making fun of his dress, which was rather antiquated, ‘when one has lived in disgrace for a long time, one is not only unhappy, but one also becomes ridiculous.’

Now began what has been called, and not without reason, *The Terror* of 1815. Nothing, indeed, was wanting to complete the analogy, except that it did not

last so long and was not so general ; which, I must allow, is certainly something.

Directly after the earliest news of the Battle of Waterloo was received, on June 25th, the mob of Marseilles—this time I will call them by their right name—rushed at all Bonapartists, real or supposed, and amongst others on a little colony of Egyptians, commonly called Mamelukes, and cut them to pieces. On July 15, Trestaillons,* with a handful of adventurers, at the head of the so-called Royalist Volunteers, fell upon the Protestants of Nîmes, and massacred a great number of them. Marshal Brune was murdered at Avignon, August 15, and General Ramel at Toulouse on the 17th of the same month. Until then the Government had nothing to do with those excesses, and confined itself to deploring in a timid sort of way what it could hardly prevent, and scarcely dared to repress ; but almost at the same time the judicial reaction commenced.

Labédoyère, who had been arrested in Paris on August 2, was condemned by court-martial, and shot on the 19th. In the eyes of the law he was certainly very guilty, and in the eyes of reason very foolish ; one could not help pitying him, however, for all he had done

* The nickname of Jacques Dupont.

was to forestall the enthusiasm of his brothers-in-arms by one day. I had known the unfortunate man at Madame de Staël's; for a long time, and during the most brilliant period of the Empire, he had honoured the exile of Coppet, and had been one of those select few who there staked their safety, their future, and perhaps even their liberty, by acting *Phèdre Alzire* or *Mahomet*.

The brothers Faucher, who were arrested on the same day as Labédoyère, were convicted by court-martial and shot August 27. Their fate and their history is well known. I would rather have upon my head and on my hands the blood of Marshal Brune, who was murdered in a cowardly manner at close quarters, than have had anything to do with the sentence passed on the brothers Faucher.

M. de la Valette was arrested August 16, and condemned to death November 20.

Marshal Ney, who was arrested August 6, was sentenced to death December 6. I will say a few words about those two trials. But as they both took place in the presence of the Chambers, the former under their influence, and the latter through the intervention of one of them, I must first stop for a moment to explain the circumstances which preceded and followed the meeting of the Chambers.

I shall pass over the entrance of the King into Paris, the occupation of the capital, the spoliation of the museum, the attempt to blow up the bridge of Jena, the first negotiations which paved the way for the treaty of November 20. I had nothing to do with all those incidents, and only witnessed them from a distance ; but I will remind my readers that, on July 13, five days after his return, the King, by the advice of his Talleyrand-Fouché Ministry, struck a series of *coup d'état*.

By an ordinance, he constituted a new body of electors, and convoked them for August 14 ;

He provisionally revised and modified five articles of the Charter ;

He struck off the roll of the peerage all those who had had seats in the Imperial Senate, and replaced them by a big batch of good royalists ;

By an ordinance published July 24, he exiled thirty-eight persons, some of them very well known, and the others altogether unknown.

By the same ordinance he handed over to the military tribunals an indefinite number of generals who had taken part in the events of March 20.

This inauguration of the new reign, with the aim, we were told, of strengthening the Talleyrand-Fouché

Ministry, which was our only guarantee against the ultra-royalist reaction, seemed to me to augur badly for the future, for it set an example of violence to people who would readily give themselves up to it.

Events soon justified my apprehensions. Even before the elections were over, M. de Talleyrand had already thrown his colleague overboard. The story goes that Carnot, whose name was on the list of exiles, went to see Fouché and said to him :

‘ Where do you wish me to go, traitor ?’

‘ Where you like, fool !’ was the answer of his former colleague on the *Comité de Salut public*.

The traitor soon joined the fool. At first, he had the offer to go as Minister to the United States, and this he refused ; then, like the heron in the fable, he was very happy and quite pleased to accept the post of Minister to Dresden, and he left France, almost disguised, lest he should be pelted as he went through certain towns ; finally this old and hideous monster retired to Gratz, where he died soon afterwards in the arms of a young and high-born lady, whose royalism had taken a fancy to him during that short interval of folly when the counter-revolution went mad over him, when the Comte d’Artois and the Duke of Wellington carried him in their arms and laid him at the gouty feet of Louis XVIII.

M. de Talleyrand's turn soon came. When the elections were over, he disappeared before the shadow of that *undiscoverable* Chamber, which he had invented and manufactured with his own hands. On October 7, the two Chambers, one quite new, the other having cast its skin, met to pass—to begin the game, and almost by acclamation—a Draconian Bill on seditious writings and cries, a Bill which suspended individual liberty, and re-established the *cours prévôtales*.

All this was hateful to me.

I had been deeply mortified by the brutal treatment to which the Chamber to which I belonged had been subjected. To my great regret, I saw the greater number of the former senators, with whom I had worked in 1814, leave it. My vexation had even gone so far, that I had resolved to send in my resignation, and of my own accord to take my place amongst those who had been eliminated. As the royal *coup d'état* had thrown open the Chamber of Deputies to men of twenty-five years of age, I thought I would try to re-enter public life by this means. On this subject, I consulted M. de Pontécoulant, who, of all my former colleagues, inspired me with most confidence from the loftiness of his character, his intellect, and his experience. He generously deterred me from carrying out

my intention, and gave me some good advice, which I followed with reluctance.

As I was not yet quite thirty years old, I made this a pretext for neglecting the sittings of the House of Peers ; but I carefully attended those of the other Chamber, where everything I heard increased my aversion for the ruling party more and more. I do not exaggerate when I say that the violence of that party, within the Chamber and outside the Chamber, in the tribune and out of the tribune, whether it wore a coat or whether it wore a petticoat, recalled in every detail the worst days of the National Convention. And this fury—for that is the only fit word to use—reached its height when the case of M. de la Valette was decided. It may truly be said that this trial was really a piece of good fortune, in so far as that it cost no life, and divided into two camps the royal Jacobins on the one hand, and on the other, honest and sensible men, no matter what their origin or the different shades of their opinions. I am not going to say anything of the ground itself for this affair—never was a more barefaced injustice committed—nor of the depositions of M. Ferrand. Since then I could never overcome my feelings of indignation and disgust whenever I happened to be near him. But

this I can declare, that nothing can give any idea of the joy which the escape of the condemned man caused throughout Paris—I mean, of course, excepting the Court and the Faubourg Saint Germain. It very nearly caused a general illumination. Early that morning, M. de Montrond came to see me, and said, with that composure which he alone could maintain when making a joke :

‘ Dress yourself ; get ready ; arm yourself ; a great crime has just been committed ; M. de la Valette, in spite of all human and Divine laws, has escaped from his prison in a sedan-chair, and the King, on learning that news, got into another, and is pursuing him as fast as he can. But it is thought he will not be able to overtake him. The porters of M. de la Valette have the start ; besides, he is not so heavy as the King.’

I was more inclined to throw my arms round his neck than to laugh. M. Bresson performed, doubtless, an act of great courage and generosity when he took the proscribed man into his own apartments, in the very buildings of the Foreign Office. He braved the ‘ white terror ’ like he had braved the ‘ red terror ’ at the trial of Louis XVI., but I would almost venture to affirm that at whatever house M. de la Valette might have gone to he would have been welcomed.

His escape had been conducted with great prudence

and resolution. One of those who staked most on the matter I knew very well, and he did not obtain the share of celebrity which he deserved for it. This was a young man, M. de Chassenon, who took M. de la Valette up into a cabriolet, in which he was waiting for him within fifty yards of the Conciergerie, whilst Mademoiselle de la Valette remained in the sedan-chair. He drove the cabriolet himself, and by numerous twistings and turnings he baffled the pack of pursuers. He said to M. de la Valette :

‘I have here four double-barrelled pistols, each loaded with two bullets. If they come up with us, make use of them.’

‘Please God, no !’ the latter answered.

‘You would be lost as well as I !’ Therefore,’ added Chassenon, whipping up his horse, ‘I will set you the example.’

And he would have done as he said, for he was an honourable and courageous man, though rather hot-headed.

Esprit de Chassenon was the son of a President of the Parliament of Brittany, and brother of M. de Curzay, Préfet of Nantes, and one of those who defended the Restoration in the crisis of 1830. I had known him in my youth ; he used often to come to

Ormes. His father lived near Poitiers, in a very fine house, surrounded by a large garden, which was adorned with statues. One day, when I was walking about in it with him, he showed me the statue known under the name of the Rémouleur,* and explained it to me in these terms: He was a slave, and whilst sharpening his knife he overheard the plot of the sons of Brutus in favour of Tarquin; he told Portia, the wife of Brutus, of it, and gave her the knife, with which she gave herself a deep wound in the thigh, and handing the knife to her husband, she said: 'Pâte, non dolet.'

Of course, the son of such a father could not have been very well educated; but though he was devoid of culture, he certainly had a very good opinion of himself. Almost as soon as he had attained his majority, he squandered his small fortune in folly and extravagance, and after he had become *auditeur*, like myself, I met him once at Fiume, where as commissariat officer he had a foolish quarrel with General Bachelet; and again in Poland, where he had a still more foolish quarrel, in which he gained nothing except a wound from a pistol shot, from which he never altogether recovered. I had lost sight of him,

* Knife-grinder.

when I heard the part he had played in the escape of M. de la Valette. We shall come across him again once or twice in the course of these recollections.

Whilst the man who had been condemned by the Cour d'Assises thus defied, not justice, indeed, but iniquity, in its own palace, the trial of Marshal Ney, which had already commenced, went on, giving rise to numerous incidents.

On November 9, the Marshal had appeared before the court-martial, which was composed of marshals and generals who, for the most part, had, like himself, taken the side of the usurper, and who would certainly have spared his life. He objected to this court, and demanded to be tried by the House of Peers, whose members were nearly all his enemies. How his counsel, the two Berryers (father and son) and Dupin, allowed him, or caused him, to commit this fatal error—for fatal is the proper word for it—I have never been able to understand.

It is well known that on November 11—that is to say, the day after that on which the court-martial had declared itself incompetent to try the Marshal—M. de Richelieu, the successor of M. de Talleyrand, came into the House of Peers like a madman, holding in his hand a speech, the whole of which had been written by

M. Lainé, and demanded justice in the name of Europe—calling, as it were, on the House to despatch Marshal Ney—just as if it related to a Bill.

The House, mutilated and packed though it was with thorough Royalists, listened to this speech with such indignation that the next day—the 12th—M. de Richelieu apologized for it. Nothing could better prove the state of mind of the Court than such a freak on the part of two prudent, moderate, and humane men.

When the House of Peers had resolved that it would regularly constitute itself into a court of justice to decide upon the fate of Marshal Ney, it carried its respect for forms so far as to impose upon itself all the formalities prescribed by our code of criminal instruction; it proceeded, through *commissaires*, to the examination of the documents, decided by *arrêt* that the accused must be committed, and fixed November 21 for the opening of the debate. Until then, I had no reason to think about the matter: a whole week had to elapse before I should be entitled to a vote; but the sitting of November 21 having been adjourned to December 4, on the application of the Marshal, the eventful day was fast approaching.

What was I to do?

I could avoid taking part in the verdict, and I had

more than one pretext for doing so. It is a judicial rule that a judge is not to take part in any trial that has already commenced. But I did not like the idea of sheltering myself behind this excuse, and I took my own course without speaking to anyone about it.

On December 4, I took my seat. I entered the Council Chamber at eleven o'clock in the morning, when the members had already assembled. The Council Chamber is the place where the House deliberated, and to which the public was not admitted. It was the picture-gallery. Even now, I can still see the place of every member whom I knew, and that which I occupied on the last bench. It seems inconceivable, but if I were required to do so, I could take my oath in a court of law that the matter for deliberation was the question of knowing whether Marshal Ney should be permitted to plead the capitulation of Paris. The House of Peers committed a fault, a great fault—I might almost say a crime—by closing the mouth of the accused on this subject. I can hear M. Molé speaking from one point of view and Lanjuinais and Porcher de Richebourg from another. That sitting marked an era in my life, and it formed an epoch in the career and in the destiny of the House of Peers. How could I have made a mistake? It must be so, however, seeing that the official report states that

this sitting was held not on the first, but on the last day of the trial, at the end of the pleadings ; but whilst I acknowledge my error, my reason submits, for my memory remains intractable, and I repeat it : were I to consult the latter only, I should take an oath even against the accuracy of the official report. Such a thing makes one tremble for human justice, for on what do its decisions and the fate of accused persons depend ?

I do not intend to enter into any details about the public part of the trial ; all historians give an account of it, and the *Moniteur* is to be found in all public libraries. On the very first day, whilst I was speaking with Lanjuinais, who sat next to me, he asked me and a few colleagues to go to his house that evening, in order to discuss the state of affairs, and to decide how we were to act under the circumstances. I readily accepted, but the meeting was only attended by the master of the house, M. Porcher de Richebourg, and myself. The others, if indeed there were any others, had apparently thought better of the matter.

We were promptly agreed as to the decisive result. It was certain that the Marshal would be found guilty, and we decided to vote for any penalty—except that of death—which would be likely to carry the largest number of votes ; transportation, which might soon be commuted

into simple exile, seemed to us to be most appropriate both as regarded the man and the circumstances.

But we could not agree as to the sense and the form which we should give to our vote, or as to the choice and explanation of our motives.

Lanjuinais maintained that we ought to take refuge behind the capitulation of Paris, which the House would not allow the counsel for the defence to discuss, but which it could not prevent the judges going into.

Our reply was that the capitulation of Paris did not protect the Marshal as far as the signatories were concerned, who, moreover, had no power to bind Louis XVIII. with regard to his own subjects ; which was true, strictly speaking. Lanjuinais defended himself badly ; if he had merely said to us that, in a criminal matter, it was sufficient that a legal means could be alleged *according to the letter* of the law, no matter what might be its moral value, in order to profit the accused party, and that in this matter the maxim, ‘*Favores ampliandi odia restringenda*,’ ought always to be adopted, he would have convinced us.

Porcher maintained that we should limit ourselves, whilst acknowledging the crime, to urging the glorious career of the Marshal, and the great services which he

had rendered to the State, which argument could also be very forcibly insisted on.

As for me, I had a system which I still regard as valid, but which, as I must allow now, was not very well adapted to gain votes for the unfortunate Marshal.

I thought, and I still think, that a Government when it is standing, and as long as it stands, has a right to appeal to the laws, public force, the courts of justice, and, in extreme cases, to the scaffold itself, for its defence ; but if it falls, it belongs to history, and to history alone, to pronounce between conquered and conqueror ; to decide on which side right, justice, and the real and legitimate interests of the country were ; whether the conquerors were rebels or liberators. I thought, and I still think, that if the course of time or of events set up again a Government which had been overthrown, that Government has no right to revert to the past and to hunt up its former adversaries for acts which preceded its re-establishment. In such a case, to strike is no longer to defend one's self ; it means revenging one's self and singling out one's victims, not on account of the crime itself, but because of such and such a circumstance ; it is worse than decimation, for, seeing that the drawing of lots is a matter of chance, it is at least impartial.

I say, again, that those views appear correct to me even now ; but how was I to make them acceptable to, or even understood by, an assembly which was merely moved by passion and resentment, when I failed to secure for them even the approval of the benevolent persons with whom I had previously discussed the matter ?

We separated, each of us still holding his own opinion ; but the very next day the Chancellor seemed to make a point of bringing me face to face, so to say, with my own foolish suggestion.

Instead of putting the question in the usual way, that is to say, in a complex form, embracing fact and law—instead of saying, ‘Is the Marshal guilty of high-treason ?’—the Chancellor divided the indictment : he first of all put the question of fact.

‘Did the Marshal read the following proclamation to the troops ?’

To this there was no other answer than ‘*Yes*,’ seeing that the Marshal himself admitted it ; then came the point of law :

‘In doing this, was the Marshal guilty of high-treason ?’

The question embarrassed nobody but me. Lanjui-nais got over the difficulty by voting ‘*Yes*,’ adding that, in his eyes, the crime was covered by the capitulation

of Paris. Porcher got over it by voting ‘*Yes*,’ reserving his appeal to the generosity of the Chamber for the vote on the penalty, which would naturally follow the vote as to the Marshal’s guilt. I was in a fix; for I could neither resort to an evasive answer, nor had I any dilatory expedient to fall back upon. During the whole time the names were being called—and, as I was one of the last, it was tolerably long—I was perplexed and nervous, as anyone else would have been; it was my first appearance as a speaker, and I was going to begin by ‘smashing the windows.’

When the moment came, I got up; and so that I might not be overcome by any feeling of weakness, if I should lose the thread of my arguments, I immediately answered ‘*No*’ to the question. This *no*, which was being repeated from mouth to mouth, gave rise to a general whisper, which enabled me to give my reasons without being interrupted, seeing that hardly anyone listened to me.

‘There is no crime’ (if these are not my exact words, they express my meaning)—‘there is no crime when a criminal intention does not exist; no treason without premeditation; no one becomes a traitor on the first impulse. In the facts so justly laid to the charge of Marshal Ney, I see neither premeditation nor a design

to betray. He was from the first sincerely determined to remain faithful, and he persisted in that resolve up to the last moment, when he gave way to the enthusiasm which appeared to him to be general, and which was only too much so, in fact. It was a weakness which history will denounce severely, but which does not, in the present case, come under the definitions of the law. Besides, there are events which, owing to their nature and extent, are outside human justice, though they may constitute guiltiness in the eyes of God and of men.'

I must say this for the House, that the boldness, I might almost say, considering the time and the circumstances, the scandal of my first vote, excited neither exclamations nor murmurs, and that, at the end of the sitting, no one turned away from me or gave me the cold shoulder any more for that. Nevertheless, we were living, and, at that moment, we were deliberating in an atmosphere of intimidation which was truly revolting. I will only give one instance of it.

Amongst the former senators who were retained in the new House of Peers, there was a little General Gouvion, who was, I think, no relation to the Marshal. I had known him at Antwerp, where he was in command at the period when M. d'Argenson was residing there as *préfet*, and I sometimes used to talk with him.

Some time before the sitting opened, I saw this little man coming, going, sitting down again, like some one in trouble. At last, he came to me, and asked me what I meant to do, that is, how I was going to vote. I explained it to him : he evidently did not understand me, but said to me simply :

‘ I shall do as you do.’

‘ Very well,’ I answered ; ‘ then sit down beside me, and we will mutually encourage each other.’

He sat down beside me, and when the time came for voting on the Marshal’s guilt, he voted ‘ *Yes*,’ like all who had preceded him ; and when the time came for voting on the punishment, he said ‘ *Death*,’ like all who had preceded him.

Poor man ! just the same thing happened to him which had happened to Marshal Ney, in the Square at Lons-le-Saulnier.

Since then I have been present, and really even taken part in, another session of the Chamber of Peers, which was fully as solemn, that which pronounced on the fate of the Ministers of Charles X. We were in the midst of a rising ; the city resounded with the march of trains of artillery and swarmed with patrols, and firing, which came nearer every moment, was heard in all directions. All we had to defend us was

the National Guard, which joined in the rising, and loaded us with abuse. Nevertheless, I am not afraid of affirming that the moral pressure was much less than in 1815; had it been the same, I do not know what would have become of the Ministers of Charles X.

When the verdict was given, it had to be signed. Several peers who had abstained, that is to say, who had refused to vote, refused to sign. In this, they were no doubt logical, but did they think of anything but of themselves and of getting rid of their own responsibility? I leave it to public opinion.

As for myself, I did not hesitate. I had taken part in the trial, and had voted freely as to his guilt, on the punishment, on all the incidents of the trial. My views had not prevailed, but that did not free me from following out my *rôle* as judge regularly and to the end, and so I signed. What would become of justice if the minority were not to submit to the majority?

At the time, it was said repeatedly that when the sentence was delivered, the peers sat down to table, and that the sitting terminated in a good supper, and really in a sort of orgie. Anonymous engravings appeared, which were secretly circulated, in which we were represented, glass in hand, almost like the Prodigal Son in the engraving in Royaumont's Bible.

This is an arrant calumny, for there was neither a supper nor anything like it.

As the sitting began at ten o'clock in the morning and did not finish till after midnight, M. de Sémonville had a refreshment-bar put up in one of the rooms; during the intervals of rest anyone could go and get some broth, or a little bread, or some other refreshment. Nobody sat down, nor did any conversation pass there.

I returned home very late; at that time I was living in the Rue Le Peletier, near the boulevard. As I could not sleep, I opened my window at day-break, and I saw an English battalion stepping forth through the street, the drums beating and the band at its head.

It was at this very moment that the body of Marshal Ney, which the enemy's steel and shot had always respected, fell, pierced by twelve French bullets.

The general of these English, who was the real commandant of Paris at that unhappy period, could, with one word, have prevented that wretched holocaust. It would have been better for his glory to have done violence to the text of the capitulation than to the conscience of Louis XVIII., by forcing a regicide terrorist on him as Minister.

After the trial of Marshal Ney came the amnesty. Like nearly all the laws of that period, it was so full

of exceptions that it bore more resemblance to a list of proscriptions than to anything else. This was nothing, however, compared to the propositions which emanated from the Chamber itself, and which had to give way to it. The defence of this law rather did honour to the Minister ; its success on nearly all points strengthened the moderate party and rallied the waverers to it.

I carefully followed the debates in the Chamber of Deputies, and I was getting ready to fill up the measure of my crimes, in the eyes of the ruling party, in resisting the law as an unconstitutional and arbitrary one, and as lacking all principles of right, of justice, and of reason.

The Chamber of Peers, as far as depended on it, spared me the trouble and the odium of this. It decided, from love of peace, that there should be no discussion, and the law was passed without a report, without debate, without even the shadow or pretence of investigation.

I had the speech which I had prepared printed ; I had it distributed, in spite of the entreaties of the Prefect of Police, M. Anglès, and I sent it to Madame de Staël.

The speech was worth nothing, and would have produced no good effect. The views on which it was based were, no doubt, honest and sensible, but the style

was obscure, pedantic, and often incorrect. When she sent it back to me, Madame de Staël declared that she had not understood a word of it; she had underlined every page and every line of the proof. It is still in my library.

The affair concerning the two millions of Madame de Staël, which her son and I had been following up before Government, being settled, and as my presence in Paris, novice as I was, and in the position which I had created for myself, could not in any way have a salutary effect, I started for Italy, whither dearer and more pressing interests were calling me.

III.

1816.

At the approach of the rainy season, Madame de Staël had left Coppet. Travelling rapidly through Piedmont, the Legations and Tuscany, she settled at Pisa with her daughter and M. Rocca, whose health was declining more and more. M. Schlegel accompanied her.

Auguste de Staël and I started for Pisa at the beginning of January, 1816. I took my brother René d'Argenson with me, as his health, though not so precarious as M. Rocca's, nevertheless caused his parents some genuine anxiety, which, however, was happily dispelled.

We crossed the Jura, which was covered with snow, with great difficulty, and the next day but one after our departure we arrived at Coppet about the middle of the night.

My marriage settlement was drawn up by the local notary, M. Bory, and, whilst he was going on with it,

I made my *début* at Geneva, and was introduced to all the society which, at that period, constituted the honour and the brilliancy of that glorious little republic.

I already knew M. Sismondi, whom I had often met in Paris; I also knew M. Pictet Diodati, member of the Corps Législatif in France, and of whom it was said that he had hesitated for some time in his choice between his two countries.

Madame Rilliet Huber received me cordially. She had been Madame de Staël's friend from childhood, and as long as she lived her house never ceased to be ours.

I made the acquaintance of Frédéric de Chateaufieux, of professor Pictet, and M. Vernet, his son-in-law; of M. Dumont, the friend of Mirabeau; of M. Bellot, the friend of M. Dumont, and of several other distinguished personages of whom I shall often have occasion to speak later on.

I only spent two or three days at Coppet, and during those two or three days I only went twice to Geneva; but that was enough to make me sincerely attached to it, seeing how favourably disposed I was then towards it.

M. Sismondi and M. de Chateaufieux were the witnesses who signed the settlement. Professor Pictet took me under his charge in the kindest manner; he

went with me everywhere—to the library, the Church of St. Peter, and into all the different parts of the town, which is so rich in memories of various kinds.

When all was settled, we started.

M. Sismondi accompanied us. He was going to Pescia in Tuscany, where his mother lived. He was to meet there the Misses Allen, sisters-in-law of Sir James Mackintosh, the eldest of whom he was going to marry.

We crossed Mont Cenis rapidly, but with a good deal of trouble, and entering Tuscany by Parma and Bologna, we merely passed through Florence.

After our arrival at Pisa, and the signing of the settlement, some days passed before the formalities with regard to the dispensation were gone through in Rome, in spite of the zeal displayed by M. de Latour-Maubourg, who was then at the head of the French Embassy.

At last my marriage was celebrated, February 15, at Leghorn, and at Pisa on the 20th of the same month.

At Leghorn it was celebrated before the French Consul, M. Miège, whom I had known at Warsaw, where he was attaché to the legation of M. Bignon. Since then he had done duty as Consul at Malta, and we

owe to him a history of the Order of Malta which possesses both merit and interest.

The Catholic service was performed by a priest to whom the *curé* of the parish delegated this duty, and the Protestant service by an Irish clergyman called De Lacy. He gave Mademoiselle de Staël a little English Bible, which I keep, and shall keep, please God, all my life, as a priceless relic of her who is no longer here below.

‘Pisa, February 20—mid-day—Casa Roncioni!’

I have not the courage to add a word to these few words written in that Bible by another hand than mine.

Our witness was an Englishman, Robert Smith, who was very well known in his own country at that period under the familiar name of ‘Bob Smith’; he was a brother of Sydney Smith, who was so celebrated, as a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, for his playful and caustic humour, and for a number of pamphlets which Swift himself would have envied.

Robert Smith was an excellent man in every sense of the word, a thorough Englishman, except that he did not possess the defects of the national character. He was a man of a broad, solid, cultivated mind; his

amiability was unassuming; he was meek, and ever ready to oblige. His rare qualities, and still more, if it be possible, the unhappiness which was visibly imprinted on his face, inspired people with deep interest for him. He had come and settled at Pisa, to try if possible, to save the life of the last of his daughters, the only one that remained to him; he saw her declining rapidly, without hope, without illusion. The blow was all the heavier for him, as at an early period he had sought in domestic life a refuge from, and consolation for, the failure of his public life.

He had been a fellow pupil of Canning, whose bosom friend he had continued to be. During the course of their studies, and on their first entry into the world, he was, by common accord, recognized as the superior of him who acknowledged no other; he surpassed him in eloquence as in everything else, and when, being scarcely of age, he entered Parliament, his appearance was looked for, like that of a star, before which all the rest were to pale. This expectation was fatal to him; he got up, began to speak, got embarrassed, sat down, and then remained, as it were, glued to his seat.

He himself told me this distressing scene, with a smile on his lips, and tears in his eyes, with charming simplicity, to teach me a lesson, and to exhort me

to overcome that timidity which, he used to say, is nothing but vanity.

In England one hardly ever gets over such a failure. Robert Smith, at the request of his friends, (and he had many and very good ones), more than once tried public life outside Parliament; he was very soon disgusted at, or discouraged by it; his domestic misfortunes thoroughly poisoned his existence; I never met a man more worthy of being pitied, loved, and honoured.

At Pisa, that hospital for affections of the chest, there were still other English figures to be seen, sadly walking *Lungarno*: amongst others Lady Bute, who regularly every year went through the whole of Italy on horseback, at the head of a regular cavalcade of children and of servants, where her daughter, since known under the name of Lady Sandon, shone in all the splendour of youth and beauty.

These English people of every condition and very diverse characters, made up in part, and in a very great part, the society met at Madame de Staël's; but the *elite* of the society of Pisa and the professors of the University were also received there with eager curiosity.

I am ashamed and sorry to say that I cannot here name the persons who formed that select society. My

memory, which is usually very trustworthy, misleads me on this point, but on the whole I was very favourably impressed; it is true, however, that just then, I had an excellent reason for seeing everything in the best light. My general impression is that, in that society, the men were more serious, and the women more refined than either have appeared to me since in the two Italian towns in which I have lived, Florence and Naples.

I have also preserved an agreeable recollection of the members of the university; they were learned, modest, reserved men, which is rare in Italy. The most amiable and best known was Rosini, author of '*La Monaca di Monza*.'

During the time that we spent at Pisa we made an excursion to Pescia and to Lucca.

At Pescia we met M. Sismondi again, with his mother, who had taken up her residence there several years previously, one of her daughters having married one of the principal inhabitants of that little town. The mother was worthy of such a son. Grave, austere, and serene, she was a veritable matron of a republic founded by Calvin. I spoke for a long time with her and her son about the latter's literary future. He had just finished the purely historical portion of his work

on the Italian Republics, and he thought of stopping short there, as far as that work was concerned. I tried hard to induce him to condense, in a last volume, the history, at once so varied and so confused, of so many small States of different origins and fortunes, and to bring out the bond of unity which existed at the bottom of their various vicissitudes. He consented, and that was one step gained. We then tried to find out what other work should succeed this, so as to fill up, in a measure, the other half of the life of its author. He thought rather vaguely of a history of France. I eagerly seized upon this idea, and we examined in long conversation from what point of view it would be well and useful to look upon it. The title of the work itself, '*Histoire des Français*,' is the outcome of those conversations; and this title is the answer itself to the question we were discussing. The history of France scarcely has ever been, at any time, anything more than the history of the Kings of France, of their principal servants, and of their acts and deeds. The moment had come for writing the history of the nation itself, of its real origin, of the development of its internal civilization and of its gradual formation. On this plan and with this design the great history of Sismondi was conceived: a history which he brought

down to the thirtieth volume, and to the reign of Louis XV.

This work, though not free from defects, possesses real and considerable merit; the scholarship is sound, exact, and varied, and it is a conscientious work—conscientious rather than true, for the first parts show too much the dislike with which the House of Bourbon inspired the author, and the indignation which the state of France excited in him during the first period of the Restoration. The Merovingian and Carolingian Kings suffered much more than was reasonable; and we often said to him in joke, that ‘he visited the sins of the children upon the fathers to the twentieth generation.’ But both the work and the author improved much during the course of years. In the latter part of his life the mind of the author became more impartial, more expanded, and more modest. The last volumes of the ‘History of the French’ are much better than the first, and the century of Louis XIV. seems to me to be almost faultless. It is a pity that his style is always rather heavy, rather incorrect; and, to use the technical expression, always rather partakes of that of the Protestant refugees.

From Pescia we went to Lucca, where we only spent a few hours. It is a small town which contained then,

and probably contains now, nothing worth seeing except the impress of the Imperial rule, which it has retained just as sand retains the impress of the foot. Princess Elisa, otherwise called Countess Bacciochi, had modelled it after the Saint Cloud, or the gompiegne of her brother; and as she had left it, so we found it in 1816; and such I found it again, since then, in 1840. At Lucca we found several persons who were worthy of figuring on a higher stage; I am sorry I cannot remember their names.

After her return to Pisa, Madame de Staël began to get rather tired of the place, and with the first breath of spring she transferred her establishment to Florence.

There society was just as brilliant as it had been dull and rigid at Pisa. Like in all capitals, whether they be large or small, the social movement, if I may use the word, was divided between strangers and natives. Strangers, the English especially, against whom the continent had been so long closed, abounded in Italy. Lord Burgersh, now Lord Westmoreland, was the representative of England at the Court of the Grand-duke of Florence. He was a genial man, and a good musician, rather than anything else. Lady Burgersh was young, amiable, and kind, and she kept up a fairly grand establishment. The Austrian Legation came after the English. M. and Madame Appony

were preparing for the part which they played so long in France. They were both diplomatists by profession, that is to say, they were foreign to everything that was not formality and conventionality.

The French Legation was of so little account, that I do not even remember who was at the head of it. Neither do I remember the name of the Russian Minister, provided there was one, which I do not recollect. As for Russian visitors, they were swarming.

The native society met in the morning as a small party, at the house of the Countess of Albany, and the evening was given up to numerous reunions, balls, concerts, routs, etc.

The Countess of Albany *née* Countess de Stolberg, widow of the last of the Stuarts, and of Alfieri, without having ever married him, connected, I do not know how closely, with a French painter called Fabre, was, in spite of her high birth, her aristocratic alliances, and her illustrious friendships, a good, rather vulgar woman, or one might rather say, a regular gossip.

Every day, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, she opened her shop for chatter and scandal. Every member of the little club brought his or her contribution of the gossip of the previous day, seasoned up with their little comments.

Not everyone who wished was admitted into this circle. Madame de Staël was an exception, and I myself was admitted as a natural consequence of her admission ; but I did not take any advantage of the privilege ; from the very first, I had made up my mind to that. Scandal has always seemed to me to be the most childish and foolish thing in the world.

The evenings were lively, gay and animated in every way. I have forgotten the names of the Florentine beauties who formed their great attractions. I hardly remember any Italian women but those whom I have met later on other stages : in Paris, London, Naples or elsewhere.

Two Genoese ladies who have since become almost French, or rather Parisian, through their long sojourn in our capital, distinguished themselves as their leaders, Madame Durazzo and Madame de Brignole, the wife of one of my colleagues at the Conseil d'État. Madame Durazzo was then at the height of her beauty ; we met the two sisters almost daily, and they were often accompanied by the little daughter of Madame de Brignole. This little girl is now the Duchess of Galliera, and when, after forty-two years, I look at her, I fancy I still see the little Marinette : her face has really not altered at all.

However, I did not take too much advantage of the higher society of Florence, any more than I did of the small female club of the Countess of Albany; in Florence, society, properly so-called, was composed of foreigners, and of what in Paris we called *ultras*, that is to say, the old prejudiced aristocracy, and refugees of the imperial *régime*. Both were nearly equally distasteful to me. I only went into society with extreme reluctance, and I was looked upon as unsociable and disagreeable; I did not complain, on the other hand, for I, foolishly enough, looked on that as being dignified and patriotic. Madame de Staël, who bore with me in this as best she could, with an amount of patience which was by no means natural to her, with difficulty persuaded me to allow myself to be introduced to the Grand Duke and Duchess of Tuscany. I submitted to the inevitable, and I was presented, dressed, or rather disguised, in the court suit lent me by M. Corsini, whom I had known as Conseiller d'État under the Empire when Tuscany formed part of it. The Grand Duke was a little, gentle, polite, timid, embarrassed man, with a cultivated mind, well versed in science, and thoroughly conversant with the literature of all the countries of Europe. I made the acquaintance of his librarian, and through the latter I visited his library.

Nothing more calculated to excite covetousness has ever come, not into my hands, for it was reserved for the use of the master, but under my eyes. It was a wonderfully well-chosen collection of classical or semi-classical authors in all the ancient and modern languages which possess works worthy of that name. They were arranged in perfect order, and bound with taste and simplicity. They were equally pleasant to the eye and easy to use ; I never got tired of turning over their leaves. I went there constantly, and from there into the four rooms of the Pitti palace, which contain, as I think, more treasures than the Vatican, more than the museum in Paris, even more than the gallery of Florence, adorned as it is with what are called the tribunes.

Towards the end of Lent I made, with Auguste de Staël, not exactly a journey, but just an excursion to Rome, where I spent Holy-Week. Being thus, whilst there, free from the control of Madame de Staël, I gave myself up to my unsociableness without constraint. I absolutely refused to set foot inside the French embassy, whose head, if I remember rightly, the Bishop of Saint Malo then was ; consequently I was not presented to the Pope, which I did not the least regret. I passed my time in going over the city, the monuments, the galleries, and in attending the religious

ceremonies. On Easter Monday I returned to Florence alone, where we remained three days, till the beginning of May.

About that time we set out together to return to Coppet.

I have preserved a delightful remembrance of our crossing the Apennines in the first breath of spring, and in particular of a village called Mascaro, where we spent a long evening. The air was delightful; the woods and meadows were bright with fireflies, which swarmed amongst the green; the monotonous murmur of the brooks seemed to form a continual bass to the happy and harmonious song of the villagers; all nature seemed to be wearing its festal dress and uttering its festal song.

We only spent one day at Bologna. The town was dull and deserted. All the *élite* of the inhabitants had, more or less, taken part in the mad enterprise of Murat. Everyone felt that his life or his fortune was menaced; those who were most compromised had taken their departure; the others had either gone into the country or remained shut up in their houses. Any intercourse with Madame de Staël would most probably have been fatal to them.

In return for this, however, we stayed several days

at Milan. I already knew all the exterior of that city—the cathedral, the Brera, the principal monuments; I had seen and admired all that remains of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, now unfortunately much disfigured by smoke; but, as I said at the time, I had made no acquaintances. On this occasion it was different; Madame de Staël was known, and her drawing-room in the inn was never empty. Amongst the first to arrive was Monti, the poet, celebrated then, and perhaps even more so now, but at that period unhappy and very much decried. The momentary reaction could not forgive him for having sung the praises of the French Revolution, of its feats and also of its excesses in Italy. I met there M. Gonfalonieri, the hope and the ornament of the Italian Liberal Party, who since has paid for that honour by a long term of imprisonment in the dungeons of Spielberg. I met the Abbé de Brême, a Piedmontese, who was then very well known in Italy, and very worthy of being so. I met also other persons whose names I cannot recall to mind at present, but which I shall think of perhaps later, and as occasion requires.

Monti, it must be allowed, cut a poor figure. He assumed an humble attitude, and his conversation was not brilliant. Madame de Staël tried in vain to raise him in his own eyes and in those of others.

On the other hand, M. Gonfalonieri was handsome, witty, full of animation and of generous enthusiasm. He had nothing to do with the imperial *régime*, nor had he dawdled in the antechamber of Prince Eugène. He got ready for the contest, in which he succumbed, for a cause which was worthy of him, and for a country which, even if it has not hitherto been able to sustain that cause worthily, has not abandoned him.

M. de Brême was Abbé only in name, and much against the grain. He never fulfilled any ecclesiastical functions; he was a professed freethinker, and devoted himself to philosophy, literature, and society. He had a powerful intellect and varied attainments, and was really amiable; but already his position as a sceptic, under his bands and in his clerical position, pained me.

He clashed with Schlegel—Wilhelm Schlegel, whose brother, after having devoted half his life to writing books on pantheism and obscene novels, suddenly became a Roman Catholic; and Wilhelm Schlegel, at the period of which I am speaking, seemed about to do the same thing. He had been seized with an ardour, which was not of long duration, for the externals of the Roman Catholic worship, and his disputes with the Abbé de Brême were interminable.

Neither of the disputants gained the advantage over

the other either in thesis or antithesis ; their arguments were not good, whatever their opinions might have been, and I was glad to see the moment arrive for our departure, which separated the combatants.

Madame de Staël returned to Switzerland by Mont Cenis and Savoy, accompanied by M. Rocca and M. Schlegel. Auguste de Staël, his sister, and I risked going over the Simplon, which pass was still obstructed by snow. On our way we paid a visit to Como, to its lake and its islands. In the mountains and in the Valais the weather was still bad, but on the banks of the Lake of Geneva we found spring in all its brilliant beauty. As we went through Cologny we stopped for a few moments at the house of Madame Necker de Saussure, and I was introduced to her for the first time. She was at Nice when I passed through Geneva at the beginning of the year.

I arrived at Coppet almost at the same time as the Session of 1816 closed in Paris. I had no motive for returning to France, where the spirit of reaction, which had been heated by the events at Grenoble, continued to increase the number of political trials. Being devoid of any personal credit, without any authority, knowing nothing of the ruling passions of the moment, and only rendering imperfect justice to the Ministry which was

fighting against them, I remained in Switzerland during the spring and summer of 1816, and did not leave Coppet till October.

Whilst, willingly or unwillingly, I left French politics alone, I allowed myself in some measure to be carried into the arena of Swiss, and above all of Genevese, politics. The struggle in Switzerland was the same as in France, and the same in Geneva as in the rest of Switzerland. It was the struggle against the victorious counter-revolution, and of the revolution which had been beaten by its own excesses, but which was represented in its defeat by those choice and enlightened men whom it had oppressed, and in its results by the interests which it had created. This justice must be done to the Swiss and Genevese counter-revolution, that it was much more moderate than that in France ; that it neither desired to shed blood nor to take reprisals on the enemies who had robbed it, and, after all, wanted little more than to re-establish the old order of things, which were objects of regret as innocent as they were powerless.

I threw myself, with all my heart, into the party which opposed the Government of Geneva.

I have already mentioned its leaders : Dumont, Pictet Diodati, Bellot, Frédéric de Chateaufieux ; on

a more advanced plan of liberalism, Fazy-Pasteur ; in a sphere in which politics took less part, the celebrated naturalist De Candolle ; Favre Bertrand, a man of the world and a learned philosopher, who devoted a large fortune to the advancement of literature and art in his country ; and lastly, Constant Achard, nicknamed the ‘ Chinese,’ who seemed really during his travels to have contracted some resemblance with the inhabitants of the Celestial Empire, and who was a man of intellect and of sense, under an habitual outside of sarcasm and of fun.

Dumont certainly was the first amongst them. He entered the Protestant ministry very young, but abandoned it very soon. Exiled from Geneva in consequence of the troubles which preceded the French Revolution in that city ; transplanted to St. Petersburg, where he only lived a very short time, having travelled with Lord Lansdowne as his guide ; then having become, with other Genevese—Clavière, Penchaud, etc.—one of the fellow-workers of Mirabeau, and the real author, as it was said, of the famous address to the King on the question of dismissing the troops ; and after having finally retired to England, where he remained till the Revolution, and where he acquired a well-deserved reputation as the friend of Romilly and

the translator of Bentham—he did not return to his own country till the Revolution, which gave life to Geneva by separating it from France.

He brought back to it the fruits of a long experience, the feelings and the habits of a thorough Englishman, and an exact knowledge of the rules and practices of Parliamentary life. The Representative Council owes him its regulations, which were copied exactly from those of the House of Commons, and that was enough to counteract the effects and the puerilities of the constitution which the reactionary party granted to the Republic. In a canton of 40,000 inhabitants, of which, as a matter of fact, the town of Geneva made up three-fourths, it was almost impossible that a representative council of a hundred and fifty members, whatever might be the electoral system, should not contain the best men amongst the population; it was hardly less impossible that it should encounter the least resistance in the executive power which it chose itself, and thenceforth, if this council were to deliberate according to wise and just rules, and such as would protect the minority, that minority would have nothing to fear from the passions of the majority—nothing serious, that is, nothing that could contain any trace of tyranny.

Having been a preacher in his youth, Dumont was a born orator. His example and his teachings formed others who soon equalled him, even if in some respects they did not surpass him: Pictet Diodati was bold and incisive; Bellot solid and vigorous—he was the leading advocate at the Geneva bar; M. de Candolle was a man of upright, firm, and candid mind—he used to express himself with wonderful lucidity. As for M. Fazy-Pasteur, they say that he sometimes rose to positive eloquence. I shall not add anything to what I have said respecting Frédéric de Chateaueux in the notice which is prefixed to his last work. Altogether, the real object of the representative system had been gained: small questions, questions of the day and of the hour, became great ones by being discussed, and hotly preoccupied men's minds; great questions, fundamental questions, were by common accord respected.

At Coppet I was in the habit of seeing the members of the Opposition, or at least the greater part of them, with one exception, M. Pictet de Rochemont, the brother of Professor Pictet. I do not know why he seemed to treat Madame de Staël with such coolness; I hardly ever met him except at the house of Madame Necker de Saussure, where, on Tuesdays, some of the

principal members of the Government used to meet, of which, however, M. Pietet de Rochemont was one of the most active and legitimate opponents.

Madame Necker is too well known, her appearance, her life, her mind, her writings have been too well described in the notice prefixed to *L'Education Progressive*, for me to add a single word to it. She bore worthily, or we may say rather, she honoured the two most illustrious names, which themselves honoured their century. Without being equal to Madame de Staël, her memory is inseparable from that of the latter, and after twenty years of family life, my regret is that I knew too little of her.

The deafness with which she had been afflicted early in life had increased so much at the time of which I am speaking, that it was quite impossible to converse with her for more than half an hour, without the greatest fatigue on both sides. This made all fresh intimacies almost impossible, and I could hardly appreciate the extent and the loftiness of her intelligence, or the force and refinement of her judgment, except by flashes, as it were; the more, however, I lived with people who had known her from her youth, or from their childhood, the more I learnt to respect and admire her.

During the course of that summer, three men who were celebrated, at least at this period, in a very different manner, were in the habit of frequenting Coppet. Lord Byron, M. de Stein, and General Laharpe; a fourth, who was then quite young and unknown, made a short stay there.

Lord Byron, who was a voluntary exile, and who had managed, not without some trouble, to pass amongst the higher classes of his countrymen, if not for the devil in person, at least for a living example of Manfred or of Lara, had taken up his abode for the summer in a charming residence on the Eastern shore of the Lake of Geneva. There he lived in company with an Italian doctor called Polidori, who imitated him as well as he could. There it was that he composed several of his smaller poems, and tried to inspire the good people of Geneva with the same horror and terror as he did his fellow countrymen; but he only half succeeded, and it was pure affectation. 'My nephew,' said Louis XIV., when speaking of the Duke of Orleans, 'is a mere blusterer about his crimes.' Lord Byron was a mere blusterer about his vices.

As he was proud of being a good swimmer, and of his management of a boat, he used to cross the lake in all directions, and came tolerably often to Coppet. His

appearance was pleasant without being refined. His face was handsome, but lacked expression and originality; his figure was round and short, and he did not move his crippled leg with as much ease and carelessness as did M. de Talleyrand. His conversation was heavy, and fatiguing because of his coarsely liberal common-places and of his paradoxes, and was seasoned with impious jokes, such as are very common in the language of Voltaire. Madame de Staël, who used to turn everybody to account, tried hard to make something of him, but did not succeed; on the whole, as soon as curiosity was satisfied, his society had nothing attractive in it, and no one cared for him to call.

M. de Stein, who was only passing through Switzerland on his way to Italy, was a tall, strong, stout German, with bright eyes and a harsh and jerky manner of speaking. His looks and his language breathed indignation against the German sovereigns, small and great, who claimed, after the victory, to re-establish absolute power, to break their word, to betray the promises which they had made to their people, and alone to reap the fruits of a struggle which they had neither begun nor carried on. He expressed himself with the greatest disdain about his own sovereign,

about the Court of Prussia and the German bureaucracy. All was lost, he said, after having been won by torrents of blood. Upright men, who had a hundred times exposed their lives, and undergone persecution, exile, confiscation for these ungrateful wretches, had nothing left but to shake the dust off their feet when taking their departure, and to wrap their heads in their cloaks.

I thought his indignation natural, and his resentment legitimate; but I thought the way he expressed them were both excessive and out of place in a foreign country, and above all before Frenchmen, who, without too much malice, might be tempted to rejoice at the miscalculations of their conquerors.

General Laharpe was a very different man.

Having retired for the future from the world and from business into the bosom of his family at Lausanne, in the canton of Vaud, of which he might rightfully call himself the deliverer, he there passed his latter days in grave and dignified repose. His very small house, simple outside, modest within, overlooked at one glance the whole theatre of the struggles of his youth, and of the successes and reverses of his riper years—the smiling and magnificent water of the Leman. His wide brow, covered with hoary hairs, crowned, in a

manner, the features of his manly face. His eyes, shaded by thick and well-drawn eyebrows, darted flames when required; his aged form had remained energetic and robust. He was fond of relating the history of the Swiss Revolution, of mentioning, frankly and without regret, the part he had taken in it, and the violent deeds, to which he had willingly lent his name and his arm. He expressed himself with respectful disdain about the sovereigns, the princes and the personages with whom the course of events and the adventures of his life had brought him in contact; but he spoke, only with enthusiasm and with tears in his eyes, of the ancient founders of Swiss liberty, forgetting that that very liberty had taken its rise in those same little cantons which he himself had oppressed and devastated in the name of the directorial union.

These reflections did not escape me, but, nevertheless, I could not listen to him without emotion. Many a time did I call on him in his retreat. I was particularly attracted to it, because my two friends of the *Censeur* were staying at Lausanne. Driven from France, they had found a refuge there, but only a temporary one; the protection of General Laharpe was not sufficient to enable them to remain there, and they were obliged to retire to England.

For the present I shall only say one word about M. Rossi. Though hardly twenty-five years of age, he was the honour and the leading light of the bar at Bologna when Murat undertook his unfortunate expedition. Constrained in a measure by his fellow-citizens to take the part of this stage-king, he left his country to avoid persecution, the threats of which followed him, however, to Rome and to Naples. Geneva was more hospitable to him than Lausanne was to Comte and to Dunoyer, and Geneva reaped the benefit of this, as I shall show later on, and on various occasions. In 1816 he had only just arrived, and I scarcely saw him.

Towards the close of that summer, I also became acquainted with two most distinguished men : Lord Lansdowne and Lord Brougham ; and I remained their friend during the whole period of my public life.

The Parliamentary session was closed in England. Lord Lansdowne was travelling with his family ; he was visiting Switzerland, and intended to spend the autumn in the South of Italy. He was intimately acquainted with Madame de Staël, and received me with unfeigned kindness. He was then already what he has never ceased to be, the very model of a high-born Whig. His birth was equal to his fortune, and his fortune equal to his culture ; he made a simple and correct use

of both ; he was liberal and munificent. Nothing was wanting in him to make of him the leader of his country, excepting the desire to occupy the foremost rank and to maintain himself in it.

Henry Brougham, now Lord Brougham, was then at the height of his fame, and in the full enjoyment of his splendid faculties. Nothing could escape his mighty and almost feverish activity. Law, jurisprudence, arts, political and social economy, natural sciences, mathematics, physical sciences—he studied everything, thoroughly and simultaneously ; and the rich variety of his conversation was quite in keeping with the wonderful diversity of view and of points of view of his powerful mind. He settled at Coppet, and, during his stay, interrupted by various excursions, I took advantage of his kindness by putting to him many questions concerning the rules of English procedure. I was then engaged on an important work on individual liberty, which I never completed, but which will be found in my papers, and which, I believe, contains some ideas worth remembering. M. Brougham wrote also for me, *currente calamo*, some rather extensive notes on that subject, and it is from the reading of those notes, which will also be found in my papers, and from the conversations to which they led between us, that dates my ardour in the study of

English legislation, a study which cost me so much time and labour.

Much to my regret, I left Switzerland in the early part of October. I was called to Paris by my private affairs and by my desire to take up my residence close to the house in which Madame de Staël was to live ; my brother-in-law came with me in order himself to select that house. As we were on the point of departing, we witnessed the arrival from Lausanne to Coppet of the two patriarchs of the little sect or mystic church of which I spoke respecting Benjamin Constant and his *semi-conversion*. Of the two, M. Gauthier, aged and really ill, only passed through Coppet ; the other, M. de Langallerie, not so old and only ill in words, remained some time in our midst. He was a short, fat little man, quite burly, rather vain and fond of good fare—such, in fact, as the droll stories of last century represent confessors of nuns and spiritual directors of devout women. One could scarcely help smiling when hearing him complain of his poor stomach whilst doing honour to the dinner, and of his sleeplessness, after having snored to his heart's content in a comfortable armchair. His meek, insinuating twang was quite irksome ; but, as soon as he spoke on purely spiritual subjects, it was impossible not to admire (the expres-

sion is not too strong) the depth and delicacy of his ideas, the shrewdness and justness of his observations, the endless resources, the marvellous expedients of his dialectics, which now plunged into a maze of arduous and subtle argumentation, without losing sight of the subject, and now rose to true eloquence, and would certainly not have been disowned by masters of pulpit eloquence. I may freely say so. I have no taste for mysticism: contemplative life never possessed any attraction in my eyes. A state of constant prayer, carried on to ravishment and to ecstasy, always inspired me with suspicion, and the dogma of pure love expressed in the language of human passions always seemed to me, even in the incomparable writings of Fénelon on 'Tranquillity of Mind,' even in the 'Spiritual Letters' of Bossuet, a kind of profanation. But we may understand sentiments which we do not share; we may acknowledge the profound grandeur and truth there are in the doctrine of thorough abnegation, and in a constant impulse towards perfection, and, on those two points, the arguments of, perhaps, the last disciple of Madame Guyon and of Antoinette Bourignon were, doubtless, ingenious and striking.

It is certainly not easy to explain, from an historical point of view, how those two female Elijahs had, on



leaving this world, dropped their cloaks on that new Elisha; how the almost ultra-Catholic traditions of Saint-Francis of Sales, carefully collected, carried to the extreme by ill-balanced minds, and spread on one side of the slopes of the Jura mountains, reached the other side, and were handed down, for more than a century, from father to son, in the midst of the families of Protestant refugees: on the contrary, it is easy to conceive how, at a period when the philosophy of the eighteenth century was flourishing amongst a sect which professes free discussion, and in a country where Arianism,* and even Socinianism, were openly taught in the pulpit, it came to pass that people who were naturally pious, and anxious to remain Christian, though in keeping with the progress of their time, should have preferred, as far as religion went, sentiment to dogma, and the abnegation of reason to its abuse.

Such was, more or less, the state of mind of Madame de Staël; such also that of M. Necker, although the latter sought refuge rather in the exclusive development of evangelical morals. Whilst showing themselves sincere Protestants and dutiful Christians, they both, in their writings and in their conversations, always

* A sect named after Arius, who denied the divinity of Christ.

avoided entering into any controversy concerning miracles and mysteries.

I do not recollect whether I left M. de Langallerie at Coppet, or whether he started before me ; but that matters little. On reaching Paris, I found that a great change had taken place. The order of the 5th of September had been issued ; the *Chambre introuvable* was dissolved ; the intrigues of the reactionary party were thus cut short, and the Cabinet was, therefore, established on a firmer basis.

Having had nothing to do with that memorable act, being then scarcely acquainted with the Minister or with the small group of enlightened men who had successfully carried it out, I was delighted, like everybody else, although I did not quite appreciate all the amount of vigour, perseverance, and skill which must have been required for its execution. It was only a little later that I did full justice to the act itself and to its promoters.

The elections followed closely on the order of the 5th of September ; they were favourable to the Cabinet. The Parliamentary Session of 1816-1817 opened on November 4, the very day appointed by the order. Some time before, Madame de Staël had arrived in Paris with her daughter, M. Rocca, and Herr Schlegel.

She was not to see another winter.

She had long before felt the first symptoms of the disease which was to carry her off. A constant sleeplessness, the cause of which, unknown at first, used to manifest itself by a general restlessness of the lower limbs, and compelled her to get up as soon almost as she had gone to bed, and to walk rapidly about the room until daybreak, soon assumed all the characteristics of a threatening attack of paralysis.

She struggled heroically with the invading disease : being invited everywhere, she used to go everywhere. She used to keep her house open to all, receiving all the distinguished men of every party, rank, and origin in the morning, at dinner, and in the evening, taking the same interest in politics, literature, and philosophy, in serious or frivolous society, in quiet and intimate or noisy circles, in Ministerial or Opposition meetings, as she used to during the early days of her youth.

The Session opened on November 28, with the debate on the Bill concerning elections ; I mean the active and real Session, the first few days having been devoted to the appointment of the various committees in both Chambers, and in that of Deputies to the verification of the contested elections.

The Elections Bill—famous since under the name of

‘Law of February 5, 1817’ — was, like the order of September 5, the work of that small number of enlightened men who formed, as it were, the general staff of the Cabinet, and who soon became well known as belonging to what was termed the ‘*Parti Doctrinaire*.’ Those men were Royer-Collard, De Serre, Camille Jordan, De Barante, and Guizot.

Madame de Staël was acquainted with M. de Barante, and with Camille Jordan.

The father of M. de Barante had been Prefect of Geneva ; his delicate consideration towards the exile of Coppet brought about his disgrace under the Imperial *régime*. That consideration is one of those recollections which outlive events, and are handed down from father to son.

M. Camille Jordan had played, under the Directory, an honourable and even brilliant part ; it was at that time that Madame de Staël made his acquaintance. The turn of his mind was rather provincial, though refined ; his heart was tender and generous ; his eloquence real, though laborious and over elaborate ; his conversation was most attractive.

M. de Barante, having been appointed *directeur général des contributions indirectes*, regarded it as a point of honour to bring Madame de Staël into relations with

M. Royer-Collard, who was already the leader and the mouthpiece of the *Parti Doctrinaire*: I make use of that word by anticipation, for it was not yet in fashion.

The interview took place at dinner, in M. de Barante's house. I witnessed it. The two chief personages easily agreed on all points; but methinks they were rather disappointed with each other—if not, I am greatly mistaken. Madame de Staël found M. Royer-Collard rather too arrogant and pedantic, and her vivacity rather took M. Royer-Collard by surprise. He never came to her house.

As for M. de Serre and M. Guizot, I never saw either of them at Madame de Staël's house.

IV.

1817.

THE Elections Bill, having been carried with great difficulty in the Chamber of Deputies, was taken before the House of Peers in the beginning of January. It had to undergo the ordeal of an ardent and laborious discussion. In support of the Bill, I had written a little speech, which I delivered very badly, and which was not listened to.

The prospects of the Bill were not very bright.

A Bill relative to individual liberty followed the Elections Bill. I wrote another speech to oppose that Bill. This second speech was better than the first, and had also a little more success. It was especially successful with the small *doctrinaire* group, whose existence and rising importance I have pointed out. I was much praised for it; it even brought about offers to me, which I scarcely heeded.

The majority in the Chamber of Deputies was then composed of two sections, one of which was openly

Ministerial, and of which the *doctrinaire* group was both the head and the mouthpiece, and the other, composed of independent members, more hostile than friendly to the Ministry, and which supported it simply out of opposition to the reactionary party.

The same features were noticeable in the House of Peers, though not to the same extent. I belonged to the independent section in both Chambers, either personally or through my connections.

I felt much hesitation in going over to the opposite camp.

That in which the course of events had placed me was growing daily more antipathetic to me. There reigned in it a certain short-sighted spirit, narrow and imbued with routine. Without any bad intent or any fixed idea, its members were following the revolutionary path. They fancied they were doing wonders by reviving the jargon, the pretensions and the grand airs of our first political assemblies; they really were the people who had neither learned nor forgotten. Nothing was more opposed to my views than that party. I was then, and have always remained since, though with the moderation which experience gives, an innovator as regards order, entirely free from the regret of the past, whatever the latter may have been, and longing for the

future. *Pour l'avenir* was the motto of my mind, as it is that of my family. Even at the present day, after so many disasters and deceptions, I can scarcely resist hoping, and, whatever may be the ultimate result, I work to bring about better days.

Nothing was less suited to my preoccupations of the time than those political discussions. I was then passionately studying—the term is not too strong—the history, the constitution, and the legislation of England. I was also studying, with an affection which grew to be filial, the history of our revolution in the writings of M. Necker, the errors of the *Assemblée Constituante*, the crimes of the *Assemblée Législative* and of the *Convention*, and the turpitude of the *Directory*. By reading those writings, I became aware of the intelligence of English and American institutions, faithfully examined with great loftiness of views and much penetrating shrewdness. The more I progressed with that work, the more I felt out of place in the party which called itself exclusively Liberal. Though having the same aim in view, our spirit and direction were quite opposite. Yet, on the other hand, to become Ministerial in the face of the foreign occupation, and under the effective tutelage of five or six Foreign Ministers, was extremely repugnant to me.

I took no part in the rest of the Session, which terminated with a very warm discussion over the Credits.

It ended on March 28.

I had, indeed, some much more serious preoccupations. Madame de Staël was suffering from a mortal complaint, and her disease was daily becoming worse. Having exhausted what little strength she still possessed, she dropped into our arms one evening, in the latter part of February, whilst ascending the stairs in the *hôtel* of M. Decazes. She had to be carried back to her carriage, and thence to her bed, when an attack of dropsy declared itself; this, having been energetically checked, disappeared, but unfortunately left the premonitory symptoms of a paralytic stroke.

On March 1, the birthday of my eldest daughter, Madame de Staël vainly tried to get up.

Gradually, however, her energetic will gained the upper hand. She was got out of bed, dressed, and carried into the drawing-room, where she used to receive visitors during part of the morning, feeling interested in everything, and chiefly in the incident of the famous Saint-Helena manuscript, the origin and fate of which I related somewhere else. She often used to give dinners. Her children used to do the honours of the table, and to preside in her *salon* of an evening.

When the fine weather came, she was transferred from the house in the Rue Royale in which she used to reside, to a house in the Rue Neuve-des-Mathurins, where there used to be a vast garden. I knew that house very well; it was the very one where, several years before, Madame Gay used to live. I also knew the garden very well; I had spent there many pleasant evenings until a very late hour in the company of many *literati* and wits, in the midst of a very mixed and lively society. The authoress of 'Corinne' was now being wheeled about in a bath-chair, in a half-slumbering state, happy only when she could sleep soundly.

The disease, which did not take a turn for some time, soon resumed its terrible progress: from the extremities, the paralysis reached the vital parts. We had recourse, in vain, to the highest medical skill in Paris—from old Portal, the former medical attendant of Madame de Staël, to Lerminier, Corvisart's pupil, and physician to the Emperor Napoleon during the campaign in Russia. I used to be constantly going from one doctor to another, in the company of Dr. Esparon, who was himself one of those whose services we had engaged, and who, in his generous anxiety to render himself useful, devoted part of his time to act as a guide and interpreter to the members of the whole

faculty. In the course of those errands, I again met with Dr. Laënnec, my former fellow-student at the Ecole Centrale des Quatre-Nations. He did not know me again, and I should not myself have recognised him. He was a man of lofty mind with a weak appearance ; he stood himself in great need of medical care. His door used to be watched by a female Cerberus, who only opened it at fixed hours. Dr. Esparon and I had to wait for a very long time before being admitted into a little oratory, the only furniture in which consisted of a crucifix and a low chair for kneeling in prayer. Laënnec proved of little use to us.

The faculty of Paris not holding out to us any hope of a cure, not even the prospect of relief to the sufferings of Madame de Stael, she expressed a strong desire to trust her case to M. Butini, a Geneva physician, then enjoying a very high reputation. I started for Geneva. M. Butini, having from the very first judged that the case was hopeless and the catastrophe imminent, declined, notwithstanding my urgent entreaties, to run the risk of a useless journey, which might have proved detrimental to his own health : he was already a very old man. Another physician, also renowned, though less so than M. Butini, was not so inexorable. His name was Dr. Jurine. I took him with me to Paris, and he

decided to come much more on account of his affection for Madame de Staël, than for any other reason. It was too late, and his discernment was not even rewarded by the appearance of success.

Night and day, Madame de Staël was devotedly tended by her daughter and by an English lady who had been residing in Geneva for many years, and whose existence, after being filled with storms and misfortunes, had become one of ardent and boundless affection for our family. Miss Randall (that was her name) and my wife used to spend the night in turn at the foot of the bed of our dear patient; as for my brother-in-law and myself, we used to watch in turn in the small drawing-room which opened on the bedroom of Madame de Staël. We noticed, however, that the fatal issue was fast approaching: the nervous agitation had become constant, the spasms more and more frequent. Madame de Staël had not the slightest illusion as regards the gravity of her case. She preserved to the last the loftiness of her mind, the vivacity of her wit, her kindly disposition towards everybody, and her keen interest in all that was going on. She only was afraid that she might not see herself die: when falling asleep she used to express her fears that she might never wake again.

Sad presentiment !

On July 13, at about eleven o'clock in the evening, after a day of very hard suffering, everything seemed at rest in the bedroom of Madame de Staël. She was dozing. Miss Randall was seated beside the bed of the patient, one of whose hands she was holding in her own ; my wife was lying, exhausted with fatigue, on a folding-bed ; as for my brother-in-law, he was resting on a couch. I came home, and threw myself undressed on my bed. At about five o'clock in the morning, I woke suddenly, left my bed, and hurried to the room of Madame de Staël. Miss Randall, who had fallen asleep, and who, as said before, held in her hands one of my mother-in-law's hands, had found, on waking, that hand cold as ice, the arm and the whole body motionless.

All was over.

The usual medical adviser, having been fetched in haste, found on the bed only a lifeless corpse.

I shall not try to depict the desolation that ensued. I do not profess to make either portraits or pictures. What Madame de Staël used to be, to her children and to those who lived in her intimacy, cannot be fully understood by anybody else.

As morning went on, and when the first outburst of

grief made room for despondency, when the dismal preparations were over, I took my wife and my brother-in-law to the apartment occupied by me in the Rue d'Anjou. M. Jacquemont, the father of the famous explorer of that name, who lived on the second story, had the kindness to place his own apartments at my disposal. There I left M. Rocca, M. Schlegel and Miss Randall, and returned alone to the house of the deceased, there to spend the night.

Benjamin Constant came to see me, and we watched together at the foot of the bed of Madame de Staël.

He was filled with deep and sincere emotion. After having exhausted personal recollections and the regrets of the past, we devoted long hours to serious reflections. All the problems which naturally rush to one's mind in the presence of death we examined and solved in a manner satisfactory to both. Benjamin Constant was a theist, but, as I previously pointed out, theist though he was, he avoided sceptical influences only through mysticism. My convictions were quite different, and much more decided. The time is drawing near when I shall have to explain them.

Madame de Staël had, in her will, expressed the wish that her body should be transferred to Coppet, and her coffin placed in the monument raised by

Madame Necker for herself and her husband. Her body was embalmed, and the coffin containing it carried away slowly under the charge of M. de Staël, accompanied by M. Schlegel. I started first, with my wife, my daughter, Miss Randall and M. Rocca.

On arriving, I had to get everything ready for the sad ceremony. That required some precautions. It was known that the remains of M. and Madame Necker were placed in a sepulchral chamber, situated in the very centre of the monument ; it was also known that they were not inclosed in coffins. Madame Necker being, during the latter years of her life, possessed by a fear of premature burial, had provided in her will that her body, and that of her husband after his demise, should be placed in a basin of black marble, and preserved in spirits of wine.

In my presence, and only by one workman, I had the walled door of the monument pulled down ; I entered alone ; the sepulchral chamber was empty ; in the centre stood the marble basin, still half filled with spirits of wine. The two corpses were lying beside each other, and covered over with a purple cloak. The head of Madame Necker had given way under the cloak ; I did not see her face ; that of M. Necker was uncovered, and in a perfect state of preservation. I

kept myself the key of the inclosure surrounding the monument ; and I appointed a trustworthy person to keep watch, so as to prevent any indiscretion.

The funeral was conducted in an impressive yet simple manner, on the day following the arrival of the corpse at Coppet ; the whole town of Geneva regarded it as a duty to accompany Madame de Staël to her last resting-place. The whole procession stopped at the entrance to the inclosure. Only my brother-in-law and I, followed by four men carrying the coffin, entered the monument. The coffin was placed at the bottom of the basin. I had the door walled up afresh, and it has never been reopened since. In the meantime, I had prevailed upon my wife to stay in her apartment.

Other matters also demanded our attention. The marriage of Madame de Staël with M. de Rocca had been solemnized by a Protestant minister, of the canton of Vaud : having been kept secret, it now required to be subjected to official regulations.

The same formalities were needed as regards the certificate of birth of Alphonse Rocca. That child, which was secretly brought up by the aforesaid minister, was weakly, and in a deplorable state of health ; Auguste went to fetch it, brought it back, and placed it into the hands of its father. As for

me, I went to Lausanne, and arranged there with M. Secretan, the friend of General Laharpe, and leading barrister in the canton of Vaud, to have both certificates redrafted according to the official regulations. This was done, by mutual agreement, and without any difficulty, before the *tribunal civil*, which, I believe, used to sit at Aubonne.

After this, M. Rocca left us ; he stayed temporarily in Geneva, and prepared to start for Nice, with his son and his brother, M. Ch. Rocca. He did not long survive Madame de Staël. We returned to Paris in order to wind up the estate. Living in Paris having, through our bereavement, become quite hateful to my wife, who was almost distracted, we took advantage of an invitation addressed to us by the excellent General La Fayette, and went to reside for some time at La Grange.*

This was the second time I had visited that hospitable and fine estate, under the roof of the kindest of men. During my former stay there, a year before, I had met the celebrated Mr. Bentham, friend and philosophical patron of my friend Dumont ; the truth is, however, that Bentham's person no more attracted me than did his utilitarian system. I had taken with me to La Grange a young American, Mr. Ticknor, who had been

* The name of the country seat of General de la Fayette.

introduced to Madame de Staël by Jefferson, and who acquired afterwards in literature a well-deserved reputation. Mr. Ticknor is now the pride and the ornament of the town of Boston, itself still the pride and ornament of North America. I shall again have frequent occasions to speak of that old and faithful friend.

During my second stay at La Grange, I met there, for the first time, the young Ary Scheffer,* who then showed promise, since fulfilled. I also met many persons whose names I do not now recollect.

The elections brought us all back to Paris; thence I went to Evreux.

These elections were the first application of the Law of February 5. It turned out successfully, *ultra petita*. Although those elections brought into the seats of the Chamber of Deputies only men naturally called by their position to sit there—although no objectionable names were mentioned amongst those of the unsuccessful candidates—the contest was pretty sharp, and the manifestations sufficiently noisy to alarm the King and the Court, to disturb the Minister, author of the newly applied electoral law, and to place weapons in the hands of his adversaries.

* A talented French artist, whose daughter became the wife of M. Ernest Renan.

I confess I had a share in that want of prudence and moderation. The two candidates whom the party to which I belonged—the Liberal, or so-called, party—got elected, at Evreux, over the Government candidates; they were both highly respectable men, justly enjoying public consideration, of moderate views, but popular, and inclined to court popularity. Their election, having been preceded by very animated meetings, and followed by a sort of demonstration, was regarded in the department of Eure as a victory for the Jacobins.

That honeymoon, so to speak, of the Liberal Party did not, at the very first, procure any advantage to Benjamin Constant. The Hundred Days were still too recent. He, however, reappeared on the political stage by means of two very trenchant pamphlets and a quarrel in his paper with M. Molé, in the course of which they both told some hard truths about each other.

That was also the time he chose to bring out his novel entitled ‘Adolphe’—Adolphe, the grandson of Werther, the son of René* the European, the father of all the Werthers, of all the Renés, of all the Adolphes, which have since then infected our literature.

* The title of one of Chateaubriand’s writings.

I never liked novels: the great beauties which are to be met with in them are few, and seem to me quite out of place; novel-writing is, in my opinion, a spurious and pernicious kind of literature; it enervates the spirit without ennobling it; it depraves imagination by deceiving it. For the ideal of private life, which, if it exists, should be free from excess and affectation, simple, severe, and dignified, like private life itself, it substitutes an ideal borrowed, as it were, and to order, in which the grand features of poetry, dressed up in the jargon of the day and of the circumstance, and the leading personages of history, cut up and reduced to the pattern of our neighbour, stifled for want of air, and cramped for want of space to move in, are devoid of lofty impulse, and grotesquely commonplace; in novels, passion degenerates into vulgar flirtation when it does not rush into fits of frenzy.

But, of all novels, those I like least, or rather, to speak sincerely, those I most dislike, are those which I may term *Roman's confessions*, in which the author, under the name of his hero, morally undresses before the public; exhibits in the eyes of everybody, with a sort of compunctive pride, the miseries and the wounds of his soul, just as the beggars, in the old Spanish stories, used to invite people at the doors of convents to

count their sores, and to touch their ulcers. ‘Adolphe’ is the first, if not in date, at least of its kind, of those new Guzmans d’Alfarache and Lazarilles de Totmès.* Besides, the novel was not very novel for me. Benjamin Constant had, during the Hundred Days, read several extracts from it on various occasions, one of which—it was at Madame Récamier’s—deserves to be mentioned here, seeing that I have omitted to do so before.

On that occasion the company numbered about fifteen persons. The reading had lasted for nearly three hours. The author was tired; as he was nearing the *dénouement*, his emotion became greater, and increased with his fatigue. Having reached the end, he was unable to master his feelings any longer, and burst out sobbing; the contagion spread among the company, already much moved: for some time nothing could be heard except sobs and cries; all at once, and owing to a physiological effect which, doctors say, is pretty frequent, the sobs, becoming convulsive, made room for nervous and irrepressible fits of laughter, so much so that, had anyone entered at that moment and seen the state which both the author and his audience were in, he would have been quite at a loss what to think of it, or how to explain the effect by the cause.

* Names of personages in old Spanish stories.

The Parliamentary Session of 1817 to 1818 opened on November 5.

The result of the elections had modified the position of parties. That to which I belonged—the Liberal side of the House—had become all the more arrogant and inclined towards revolutionary ideas. Periodical banquets were instituted, which were presided over in turn by those of the Liberal Party who sat in the Chamber of Deputies. I often attended those dinners; the language resorted to at those meetings quite displeased me; I was still more displeased by the direction given to minds and ideas. I quietly severed all connection between the ringleaders and myself.

The purely Ministerial Party, being, not unreasonably, alarmed, had become somewhat retrograde, and, for that very reason, was still less attractive to me.

But the head of that party, the small phalanx to which the public had given the denomination of *doctrinaire*—a name which was rather willingly accepted—was daily making new advances to me, and my ideas had gradually become similar to those which came from that party. By entering its ranks, I naturally inherited the position of my mother-in-law in society, just as I had inherited the title and the rank of my grandfather

in the State. I, therefore, joined an Opposition which had hopes of power with some chance of obtaining it. It remains to be seen what use I made of those advantages, with which my personal merit had nothing whatever to do.

BOOK IV.

FOURTH PERIOD.

1818—1822.



I.

1818.

I SHALL divide the twelve following years into three distinct periods.

From 1818 to 1822 the efforts of all good and sensible people were directed towards reconciling the Restoration and the Revolution, the old *régime* and the new aspirations of France.

From 1822 to 1827 all their efforts were directed towards resisting the growing influence of the counter-revolution.

From 1827 to 1830 all their efforts were directed towards moderating and regulating the reaction in the opposite direction, and everyone knows to what extent, and why, those efforts failed.

I shall limit myself, as is my rule, to recalling the part which it fell to my lot to take in all these changes, the outcome of which (I will not take upon myself to decide whether it was fatal or favourable) will, in history, be always called the Revolution of July.

The Session of 1818 opened with a small success for the Doctrinaire Party, which was soon, however, followed by a slight check. Of the five candidates who were presented to the King by the Chamber of Deputies, four belonged to this almost infinitesimal party: M. de Serre, M. Royer-Collard, M. Camille Jordan, and M. Beugnot.

M. de Serre was chosen.

He endeavoured to inaugurate his presidency by the reform, or, rather, by the remodelling, of the Chamber, taking for his basis the English House of Commons. In this he imitated what M. Dumont had successfully carried out at Geneva, a reform which I had explained to my new friends. M. de Serre was less fortunate than M. Dumont. He found an insurmountable obstacle in that spirit of routine which our first elective assemblies had bequeathed to us. His proposal, which was assailed on all sides, was thrown out on February 20. I have very often regretted it since, and I

am convinced that, if the chief points of this proposal had been adopted, it would have had a great and wholesome effect on the progress of the debates, and, by this means also, on the direction of public affairs in general. It is very strange that M. de Serre, a returned *émigré*, an officer of the army of Condé, a provincial lawyer, a magistrate who was versed solely in the ways of the courts of justice, should, by instinct and almost by divination, have understood the essential conditions of Parliamentary government better than the most enlightened of his colleagues.

The three chief Bills which were debated during the Session were laid before the Chamber as soon as it met :

The Press Bill, November 17 ;

The Bill for the Renewal of the Concordat, on the 23rd of the same month ;

The Bill for Recruiting the Army, on the 29th.

The Doctrinaire Party raised its standard on the question of the Press Bill. Nearly the whole of this staff, without any soldiers, were members of the *Conseil d'Etat*. At the time of the preliminary deliberation, all the members of the *Conseil* had proposed to submit all offences of the press to the consideration of a jury. Defeated on that field, they appealed to the Chamber of

Deputies, and brought forward their proposal again in the shape of an amendment. This was to act, if not in opposition to the Government, at any rate independently. I was one of the number.

The debate was bold and brilliant. M. Royer-Collard went so far as to maintain that a jury alone had legitimate jurisdiction in all matters concerning the press, seeing, as he said, that offences of this nature can only be taken cognizance of in equity.

This was a case of endangering the cause by exceeding the proposed measure, and I had many a discussion with him on the subject.

M. Pasquier, who was then *Garde des Sceaux*, having rashly ventured on ground of which he did not know much—I mean bringing in the celebrated debate which took place in the House of Commons in 1791, on the nature and limits of the power of juries in matters concerning the press—and as his mistakes were numerous, our *divan* held a consultation. In my quality of a student just fresh from attending his classes, I drew up the heads of a reply for Camille Jordan, which was highly applauded. It was a real success, of which I had my small share.

This Press Bill, which was very badly drafted in all respects, and which had been very badly used during

the debate, received its death-blow in the Chamber of Deputies, although the amendment with regard to the jury had been lost. The House of Peers finished it off; but before dying it had given birth to a *child*. Its last clause prolonged the censorship over newspapers and periodical publications for a year. During the height of the struggle, this clause was detached, and became an independent Bill. Admitted in this shape by my new friends, it was attacked by my old ones, and I myself attacked it vigorously in the House of Peers. No doubt I was wrong, for the liberty of the press was impossible in the face of five hundred thousand foreigners; but, though my attack was not successful, it did not injure me in the eyes of my colleagues, and my venture was well received.

The Bill for the Renewal of the Concordat was not discussed. After vehement and long disputes, the Minister and the Commission could not agree, and soon afterwards the Concordat itself was abandoned. It was the favourite hobby of M. de Blacas, who was at that time banished to the embassy at Rome, and it was a work of pure counter-revolution; the party were more tenacious of it than the King, and the King than his Ministers. I shall have occasion to revert to this

subject later on, when I come to speak of a negotiation with which I was entrusted in 1833, by the express desire of the Chamber of Deputies, and the singular ending of which I shall have to relate.

The Bill for the Recruiting of the Army was, for the Session of 1818, what the Electoral Law had been for the Session of 1817 : I mean a field of battle between the Ministry and the Royalist Opposition. It was also, like the Press Bill, a field for skirmishes between the Ministry and the Doctrinaire Party.

The fundamental idea of this law, as Marshal Saint-Cyr conceived it, was borrowed from the works of my grandfather, which were deposited at the Ministry of War, and of which I possess the copy. Marshal Saint-Cyr himself was very particular to declare this several times during the course of the debate, and to make use of a justly honoured name. This idea was to divide the French army into as many *corps-d'armée* as there were distinct districts in France, each district having to keep up the *corps-d'armée* which bore its name to its full complement of men, each corps being a small army in itself, composed of regiments of all arms, with artillery, engineers, military train, etc.

This system was vigorously attacked and sturdily defended. It is not my business to look upon it from

a military point of view ; politically I see great advantages in it, which I have endeavoured to explain elsewhere.

But, nevertheless, that was not the field of battle. It was on the question of the veterans, the object of which was to rehabilitate the Army of the Loire, which had recently been disbanded ; it was on promotion by seniority, the object of which, whether it be good or bad in itself, was to withdraw the army from the influence of the Court, and from the retrospective invasion of the emigration.

On these two points the struggle was violent, abusive, interminable. The Royalist Opposition exhausted all its arsenal of invective and recrimination. The Ministry, supported by the Doctrinaire Party, replied with vigour and authority. The Bill itself had been prepared under the eyes of the Marshal by a commission of which M. de Barante was chairman. The preamble to the Bill had been drawn up by M. Guizot, and the speech with which the Marshal closed the debate was also due to the former statesman.

Its success was immense.

But, whilst supporting the Ministry on all essential points of the Bill, the Doctrinaire Party attacked it

vehemently on one particular point. It insisted that the contingent which was levied every year should also every year be the object of a separate law. The Minister refused to agree to this; I really can hardly tell why. At last the struggle ended in a compromise. It was settled that the permanent law should settle the principle of the annual contingent, and that a particular law should fix annually the number of men to be deducted from this contingent, as also the number of men to be raised in each district of departments.

Nothing could have been more reasonable.

The debate in the House of Peers was long, without being as violent as that in the Chamber of Deputies. My name was down to speak in favour of the law, but my turn did not come.

The labours of the Chambers were my habitual point of contact with the Doctrinaire Party, and my only point of contact with the Government, properly so called. They did not look upon me as an opponent, although I was not regarded as being one of their party. At Court and in aristocratic society I was looked upon as a Jacobin, although my bad reputation did not reflect on my wife and family. On the contrary, my wife's exalted reputation reflected on to me, and the amiability of her brother was an excuse for my moroseness. They were

in the habit of frequenting the highest circles together, and in some measure attracted them to my house. The extreme beauty of my wife, the superiority of her mind, the vivacity and the charm of her conversation, exercised an irresistible charm on all who were brought into relation with her.

The society which I received in my house, and the principal features and general complexion of which M. Guizot has indicated in the second volume of his 'Memoirs,' was composed of very different elements.

✓ In the first rank there figured the principal remains of Madame de Staël's society, which was already divided into two opposite camps; on the one side M. de la Fayette, Benjamin Constant, etc., and on the other M. Mathieu de Montmorency, De Montlosier, De Custine, and others. Then there came the principal members of the Liberal side in both Chambers, who met periodically at the house of M. Laffitte, and the principal members of that intermediate opinion, who were beginning to be called the Left Centre, and who met periodically at the house of M. Ternaux.

Lastly there came, outside politics, the younger men who were the friends of my brother-in-law, and the young women with whom my wife was intimate: Madame

de Castellane, Madame Anisson, Madame de Sainte-Aulaire. I had known Madame de Sainte-Aulaire before my marriage, and had met M. de Sainte-Aulaire in society in my early youth. Since the Restoration my connection with both had become closer and closer. The Doctrinaire Party engrossed the conversation in their house as in mine.

Small as it was, it was already divided into chiefs and adepts, and newly formed as it was, into young and old Doctrinaires.

The wise men of the party were, as I have said above, M. Royer-Collard, M. de Serre, M. Camille Jordan, and M. Beugnot, at whose side M. Guizot was already taking his place, young as he was. M. Royer-Collard possessed authority; M. de Serre eloquence; M. Guizot activity of mind in all matters, lofty views, and a great variety of knowledge; Camille Jordan was the most amiable and the most engaging. His mind was candid and elevated, his disposition affectionate and modest, his memory full of recollections, if one may say so without tautology; his persuasive and deep-seated tenderness of soul was united to a vein of sarcasm, at the same time ingenuous and stinging; he used to be called the '*angry sheep*.'

✓ The young Doctrinaires, who since then have all made themselves a certain name in letters or politics, were at that time grouped behind M. Charles de Rémusat, the *princeps juventutis* of the period, who had one of the most naturally richly endowed minds I have ever known, and behind M. Germain, the brother-in-law of M. de Barante, a man of feeling and of reason, who was too soon taken from us.

Jokes and jests, as I have said before, were freely indulged in against the Doctrinaire Party; Royalists and Liberals, insignificant newspapers, and important pamphlets joined in the game to their hearts' content.

In order to put an end to this, M. de Rémusat had the idea to get hold of their jokes, and to carry them to the extreme, so as to get the laughter on our side by despatching us with a good grace. He composed, and sang, in the various *salons* we used to visit, a very witty poem, which everyone began to repeat with outbursts of laughter, and which, I hope, will not be lost, although it was never printed.

I can only remember the few following verses, which may give some idea of it :

‘Aujourd’hui tout le monde pense.
En y pensant je me suis dit :
D’un parti chacun est en France ;
Il m’en faut un grand ou petit ;

Or, il en est un fort paisible
Qui daigne m'ouvrir sa maison :
C'est un parti très peu visible
Et presque un être de raison.

‘ Avant hier, quelqu'un m'y présente
Le parti s'était attroupé ;
Toute la faction pensante
Se tenait sur un canapé.

‘ Nos majestés sont décidées,
Dit le doyen, je vous admetts ;
Sous la garde de nos idées,
Venez placer vos intérêts ;
Mais, en suivant notre bannière,
Souvenez-vous de parler haut ;
Répandez partout la lumière,
Sans être plus clair qu'il ne faut.

‘ Faites de la métaphysique ;
Tous les matins exactement ;
Abstenez-vous de la pratique
Toute l'année étroitement ;
Doutez fort de la théorie,
Afin de vivre longuement ;
De notre abstraite confrérie,
C'est le triple commandement.

‘ Notre parti, qui croît à l'ombre
A besoin d'un public discret ;
Vous jouerez le rôle du nombre ;
Placez-vous sur ce tabouret.

— ‘ Monsieur, quand donc espérez-vous
Que notre règne nous arrive ?
— Monsieur, l'avenir est à nous.

—Mais il n'y paraît pas encore.
 —N'importe le temps n'est pas mûr ;
 Mais il viendra.—Quand ?—Je l'ignore,
 Et voilà pour quoi j'en suis sûr.*

This lively piece of badinage reconciled the public to the pretensions which had quite gratuitously been assigned to us, and enabled us to carry on quietly our

* Nowadays all the world is thinking. In thinking of this, I said : 'Everyone in France belongs to some party ; I must select one, whether small or great ; now, there exists a most peaceable party which deigns to receive me ; that party is not prominent, and is almost a sensible party.'

The day before yesterday some one introduced me to it ; the whole party had assembled, and the thinking faction had found room on one sofa.

'Our Majesties having agreed,' quoth the leader, 'I admit you ; come and place your interests under the care of our ideas ; but in following our banner, mind you speak up ; spread the light everywhere, but don't be clearer than you need be.

'Carefully every morning mind you study metaphysics ; abstain strictly from practising them all the year round : have strong doubts on theories, so that you may live long ; that is the threefold command of our abstract brotherhood.

'Our party, growing in the shade, requires a discreet public ; you will act as a stopgap, so get you on this stool.'

—'Sir, when do you hope our reign will come ?'

—'Sir, the future belongs to us.'

—'But it does not appear so now.'

—'No matter, the time is not ripe yet ; but it *will* come.—When ?

—I don't know ; and that is the reason why I'm convinced of it.'

weekly meetings, and to discuss the questions of the order of the day.

The only two members of the Ministry who came to my house were M. Molé, whom I had known for a long time, and M. Decazes, who had married the eldest daughter of M. de Sainte-Aulaire by his first marriage.

M. Molé, as I have already said, was very amiable, and, in spite of the vehemence of his opinions—in spite of the reserve which his character and position imposed on him—seemed to take pleasure in our society.

The visits of M. Decazes were less frequent; in fact, we rarely saw him except at the house of his mother-in-law. He cared less than M. Molé for the literary discussions, which formed the chief topic of our conversations of the moment. It was at this period, if I am not mistaken, and in the *salon* of Madame de Sainte-Aulaire, that M. de Lamartine first appeared in Parisian society. I can fancy that I still hear him reading his ‘*Méditations*’ for the first time, and that I am again a witness of the first sensation which they caused. At this period also appeared the first volume of the ‘*Essai sur l’Indifférence en Matière de Religion*’ (Essay on Indifference in religious matters), which created great indignation on the one hand, and an equally great admiration on the other. Other writings, which were

well worthy of fixing the public attention, marked at the same time the revival of a literary spirit under the auspices of political life—the philosophical lesson of M. de Laromiguière, that amiable metaphysician of whom I have spoken more than once; the philosophical researches of M. de Bonald; the Essay on the monarchical system under Louis XIV., by M. Lemontey; ‘the Memoirs’ of Madame d’Epinay. Heaven only knows to what interminable discussions those works gave rise in our drawing-room, and what quick repartees these discussions excited amongst so many witty and cultured people.

My brother-in-law and I contributed our share by editing the ‘*Considérations sur la Révolution Française*’ (Considerations on the French Revolution), Madame de Staël’s last work, upon which she was engaged until the day when the pen fell from her failing hand, a work which was ended without being finished, and which she had expressly charged us to revise.

A revision was indeed indispensable.

Madame de Staël used to write her books, so to say, *currente calamo*. Her plain writing-desk, which I have religiously kept, she used to place upon her knees; she wrote almost without any erasures, on copy-books without any margins, and, when the book was finished,

she had the whole copied into a series of copy-books, to which she made additions and variations; a second copy followed the first, and then, often, a third, which underwent the same system of correction, and generally the printing was done from this third copy, and the text was, besides, corrected in the proofs.

The manuscript of the '*Considérations sur la Révolution Française*' (Considerations on the French Revolution) was only in the second copy, which I have preserved in the library at Broglie. It was the more necessary that it should be carefully revised, owing to the great value which the authoress put on it. It was, indeed, as she thought, the public life of M. Necker in opposition to his private life—it was a last monument of filial piety, the final portion of which was originally intended to be but a living commentary on, and the historical development of, the principles laid down, and of the events related in the first.

As may be easily guessed, the work as it went on greatly exceeded its first conception; it had acquired by degrees much greater dimensions and extent. It made a great sensation, the Royalist Party being very irritated at it, the Extreme Left of the Liberal Party being moderately satisfied with it, whilst all the rest of

the public looked upon it as the exact truth, and took it for their *vade mecum*.

My brother-in-law and I revised it conjointly ; but, as he had more leisure, the chief part of the labour fell to him.

Our time being taken up by those various occupations, the winter passed quickly by. The Session having finished early, we also set out for Switzerland early and settled down at Coppet to spend the season. In May my second daughter was born. We found there the same society which I have already described, but increased by one figure, who was hardly mentioned in the first account, and who was beginning to attract much attention : M. Pelegrino Rossi, who was then lecturer of Roman law in the Geneva University, and preluding to his high reputation as a jurist.

II.

1819.

I MUST own plainly and without consideration that, if this work should come under the notice of my political friends, perhaps they would bear me a grudge for it ; if it should come under the notice of our common opponents, perhaps they would be satisfied with it ; but, above all things, the truth. I look upon our conduct—and by ‘our,’ I mean here all the most honourable and sensible portion of the Liberal Party—I say, I look upon our conduct, with regard to maintaining the electoral bill, and, consequently, the overthrow of the Richelieu Ministry, as a capital fault.

As a matter of fact, we all accepted the Restoration, either on principle, or from inclination, or from reason. Thenceforth it was necessary to treat with it—without temper, without disdain, without impatience—to take note of its weak points, and, so to say, to steer ourselves clear of its breakers.

It should have been neither a matter for complaint

nor for astonishment, to find very little inclination for a Constitutional Government in the reigning house ; but it was a real piece of good-luck that the King actually thought that he was the author of the Charter, and that he threw an author's self-love into it.

It should have been neither a matter for complaint nor for astonishment to find the emigration—the emigration from within as well as that from without, and God knows that the latter was not the worst—to find it, I say, fossilized with prejudices and folly, mad with rancour, eager for the spoil of all the good things of this world, demanding everything, ruling everything, embroiling everything ; but it was a real piece of good luck to have an *émigré* at the head of the Government—an *émigré* of the old nobility, who had left France in 1789 and returned in 1814—an *émigré* who was an honest man, and one with a heart and with reason—an *émigré* who, whilst he was a patriot in a foreign country, was independent at Court, who despised the popularity of his caste as he did that of faction ; a man whose disinterestedness was superior to every trial, whose fidelity was above every suspicion ; a good administrator, as far as a man can become such in a *barbarous* country, modest about what he did not know, but holding out in everything for right and good sense. For a Restoration,

for King and people, for the Government and the governed, he was a pearl of great price.

Lastly, there should have been no matter either for complaint or surprise that, after ten years of a revolutionary *régime* and fourteen years of absolute government, there should have been only very few men found in France who had the love of liberty in their heart, and who could mentally grasp its essential conditions ; but it was a real piece of good-luck that there were men in the Ministry who belonged to the new France, and men who, threatened in their political existence by others who had sprung to life again from the old France, were accustomed to business, and used to all the details of civil and military administration, under the very eye of a clever and watchful despot—men who were obliged, whether they liked it or not, to depend for support and for the means of action on Parliamentary procedure and Liberal institutions. Such indeed were M. Pasquier, M. Molé, M. Corvetto, and even, in some respects, Marshal Saint-Cyr.

It was necessary to preserve such a King, such a Minister, such a Ministry, as the apple of one's eye ; it was necessary not only to support them, but to support them in their good intentions, whether they were natural or imposed upon them by circumstances, and

thus it became needful neither to press them beyond measure, nor to frighten them at the wrong time. It was even necessary to overlook many of their faults ; at this price a start was made, and at this price only could the ground that had been gained be maintained. One day, in 1831, at the very height of the strifes of that period, M. Casimir Périer said to us, ‘ Your support is no use to me when I am right ; when I am wrong is the time you ought to support me.’ He was right, and this whimsical idea is as good as an axiom. We did not know so much about it in 1819, but we did know enough already to have no excuse for sacrificing the Ministry of M. de Richelieu in order to support the electoral bill.

Really, M. de Richelieu was only half in the wrong, and was not alarmed without some reason. The Bill as to elections, good as it was in principle, was imprudent in some respects, and was evidently bearing revolutionary fruit. It was hardly possible to maintain it as it was, and the proof of this is that the Ministry formed for this very object was the next year obliged to give up the Bill. Good sense seemed to recommend a compromise. By substituting the election by *arrondissements* for election by departments ; by abolishing also the *scrutin de liste* ; by limiting the number of electors

admitted simply on account of their being taxpayers, just as we limited in 1850 the number of electors admitted to the franchise by universal suffrage—I mean by the reasonable and moral condition of a domicile of three or five years, the Bill of February 5 would have lost all its disadvantages, and satisfied the King, the Ministers and all reasonable people, without crushing the Ministry ; this example of moderation and of sincerity would, on the contrary, have pledged them to a right path more and more, and, according to all appearances, have led them step by step further than any of us at that period would have dared to hope.

Instead of this, our resistance (I say *our*, for we did nothing in the matter except by my wishes and by what I said in private conversation) brought about the retirement of M. de Richelieu, and the breaking up of the Ministry, without giving us the power of forming a new one which should be subservient to us, and should be strong enough to carry on the struggle which would fall to its lot.

The successor of M. de Richelieu, M. Dessoie, was an old general of the Army of the Rhine ; a man of discriminating judgment and a moderate mind, but who knew nothing of the difficulties of Parliamentary Government ; whose conduct in 1814 and during the Hundred

Days had been honest and sensible, his services of a medium order, and whose reputation had almost been forgotten ; he was, in fact, a last resource, or, if you like, a stopgap to fill the place of Prime Minister for M. Decazes, who did not yet seem to have mettle enough to occupy it. M. Louis made an excellent Finance Minister, although he was no speaker ; M. Portal was an enlightened man, a hard worker, and a man of sense. M. de Serre alone represented the party.

The attack on the new Ministry began as soon as the Session opened. It was only with great difficulty that the indispensable Bill which prolonged the imposition of the land tax for six months, and which had been vehemently opposed by the Right in the Chamber of Deputies, was carried in the Chamber of Peers, and it was also with great difficulty that the proposal to vote a national recompense, which he had assuredly so well earned, to M. de Richelieu, passed both Chambers without an amendment. The same resistance was offered on the part of the Right to the Bill which was to regulate the date of the financial year ; but all this was but the prelude to the grand attack.

On the 20th of February, the day on which the House of Peers was summoned to examine the pro-

posed Bill on the financial year, old Barthélemy, the late member of the Directory and a victim of the *coup d'état* of Thermidor, asked leave to speak, and proposed to bring up the Elections Bill.

It had been expected.

The Right of the House had allied itself to the Ministry which had recently been turned out; on this ground we were in a large and evident minority, and so, in spite of the efforts of the new Ministry, there was no uncertainty and scarcely any debate.

My name was put down amongst the first speakers, but I had no opportunity, and had to be contented with having my speech printed; I do not think it was bad, and it contained several very good arguments on the nature and the fame of Parliamentary institutions.

The same thing happened, and happened to me also, with regard to the Bill the debate on which had been interrupted. On February 26, the proposal of Barthélemy was carried by 94 votes to 60; on March 4, the Financial Year Bill was thrown out by 93 votes to 64. The majority, which was devoted to the former Ministry, carried on its hostility towards the new one triumphantly. I was sorry that I could not obtain a hearing, as I had prepared a series of arguments which, I think, might have embarrassed our adversaries.

War being thus declared within the House of Peers, and as a consequence between the two Chambers, it was necessary to prepare for it.

On March 5, the day after the Bill as to the financial year was thrown out, an addition, vulgarly called a batch, of sixty-one peers was inflicted on our Chamber. Amongst them were seen most of the remains of the Imperial *régime*, with the exception of Marshal Soult, over whom the recollections of 1814 and of Waterloo still hung; the greater part of the generals of the Army of the Loire, those who had been prosecuted in 1815, Becker, Belliard, and others besides. In the second month of our new Liberal Ministry, we were in for a *coup-d'état*; I say *coup-d'état*, although it was rather an infraction of the spirit than of the letter of the Charter. Strengthened on this side, the Government, in a fair fight, got the proposal of Barthélemy thrown out in the Chamber of Deputies, who did not ask for anything better. The debate was like a thunderbolt: for the Right, M. de Serre was bold, eloquent, passionate; during the course of it, M. de Sainte-Aulaire denounced the massacre of the Protestants in the department of Gard, with different success from that which M. d'Argenson had obtained in 1815.

Having thus regained the upper hand, he was obliged to mark his return to power, and to signalise his victory by some brilliant success. Press legislation was the most urgent matter; there were no longer any foreign troops on our territory, and no further pretext for tergiversation or delay; in 1818 we had demolished all the projects of the defunct Ministry, and the time had come to carry out our principles, and to perform our promises.

Officially, M. de Serre was Garde des Sceaux, whilst in fact he was the representative of the Doctrinaire Party in the Ministry. In these two-fold capacities, he had to act for himself, and he took M. Guizot and I as his assistants, or rather as his collaborators, and eventually, after several negotiations, the work which I had prepared prevailed in its essential ideas; as it is still, after many vicissitudes, the foundation of our actual legislation, I am responsible for all in it that belongs to me.

I had divided the whole of the legislation on the press into three distinct parts :

- (1) The definition of crimes and misdemeanours.
- (2) Procedure.
- (3) The guarantees which were to be demanded from the periodical press.

This division, which was accepted by the Government, could not then encounter, nor has it ever encountered since, any difficulty in the Chambers.

From that there sprung three Bills brought in simultaneously, but severally distinct; I insisted on this point, and I carried it, as I have always been very much opposed to every principle of codification. I have given my reasons in a voluminous note, which will be found amongst my papers.

The three Bills were founded on a common basis, namely, that no distinction could be admitted between the various means of publication, whether it were printing, lithographing, drawing, engraving, or even public speaking, but that the fact of publication must be real, voluntary, and regularly verified.

I had divided the first Bill into four heads :

Provocation to crimes or misdemeanours.

Offences against public morals.

Offences against the constituted authorities.

Defamation and abuse of private individuals.

At first I had some trouble with my collaborators, who wanted to reduce these four heads to provocation only, by giving it a wide and elastic signification; but I had not much difficulty in convincing them that it was as contrary to the reality of facts as it was to

strictness of language to confound acts which merely led to wrong-doing with those which directly carry it out and consummate it.

After this first point was gained, I reduced provocation followed by deeds to simple complicity, as is allowed in the penal code; every species of particular provocation had thus its own particular definition contained in that of every sort of crime or misdemeanour; and lastly, when the provocation had had no results, it sufficed, *cæteris paribus*, to reduce the penalty in proportion.

The procedure was unassailable from the logical point of view; it was so simple, so straightforward, so short, that, in theory, it has held good up to the present; but its defect, if it be one, was that, as it excluded all arbitrary decision, there was no other remedy but to load it with exceptions. The Council of Ministers, with M. Decazes at their head, were not behindhand in this respect, and thus opened the way for their successors, who since then, from time to time, resolutely followed it. I must, however, do M. de Serre this justice, to say that he supported me from beginning to end.

Under the name of *outrages à la morale publique* (offences against public morality), I understood in my own mind, not only offences against universal morality,

or against natural religion, that is the basis and confirmation of morality, but outrage on any particular form of worship, any natural or positive belief, seeing that it was worthy of legitimate and lawful respect, as the consequences of a sacred right, that of searching after truth, and that every man should be allowed to worship God according to his intelligence and to his conscience.

Whilst granting full freedom to all philosophical and religious controversies, subject to the one condition that they should not be insulting, that is, that they should be carried on in grave and moderate language, I intended to declare everything that exceeded this contrary to morality and forbidden by public decorum, as the legislature looked upon itself as incompetent to protect anything else except the right which all sincere convictions had to mutual regard and consideration.

The intention was just and wise; liberty of discussion in any matter is incompatible with good order and public peace, except under such conditions, but it was difficult to set out this idea clearly with the aphoristic precision of legal language.

The Bill which I had drawn up, such as it was, having been adopted by the Ministry in default of anything better, was attacked almost equally by free-

thinkers and believers of all persuasions, but it was skilfully defended by M. Cuvier, with authority by M. Royer-Collard, and with incomparable eloquence by M. de Serre; it was carried in both Chambers by means of a high hand, and, like my theory of provocation, was soon lost in exceptions and circumlocutions.

I had chosen the word 'offence' to designate a misdemeanour committed by means of publication against the King, the Chambers, the princes of the blood-royal, and the heads of foreign Governments.

This word corresponds, as a matter of fact, to a correct and delicate shade of idea: individual or collective persons who, by their dignity, can be insulted: they cannot be libelled or calumniated.

The word was found to be correct, and was maintained.

Libel and calumny cannot result in injury, except when proceeding from equal to equal, that is to say, when arising between persons whom the constitutional compact regards as being on a par, even though those very persons should admit certain distinctions between themselves.

Libel is the imputation of some dishonouring fact; calumny is the false imputation of the same fact.

Taking into consideration the difference in the sphere

where the two terms could be applied, in my Bill I left the injured party the choice of taking proceedings for libel or calumny. By this means, in the latter case, he would have the right to bring his opponent to book, by calling on him to prove the alleged facts; but, I must allow, in the other case some suspicion of the truth of the alleged fact was allowed to rest upon the injured party. I think my system was just and manly; it did not sacrifice the innocent to the guilty; but, thanks to the effeminacy of our manners, the opposite system prevailed.

Proceedings for libel alone were admitted.

Much to my regret, I had to give way with regard to the conviction of private individuals, but I kept firm as far as concerned public functionaries. I maintained, and I got it passed with great difficulty, that every public functionary who was attacked with regard to his office, should be obliged, in bringing an action, to urge or to submit to the proof of the fact imputed to him, and if the fact were proved true, he should have no right to any explanation.

This arrangement caused the liveliest debates in our little preparatory council; I was supported by M. de Serre, M. Royer-Collard, and M. Guizot; I am not exaggerating when I say that M. Cuvier cried from

vexation and anxiety. He gave way, however. Quite as lively and as long was the debate in the two Chambers, and for a time it had the same success ; I say for a time, for it was one of the first points that were sacrificed in the reaction that set in the very next year ; according to my views it formed an implied, but an integral part of the constitution itself.

There was no difficulty about the definition of abuse, nor any difficulty on procedure as to sending provocations, outrages, offences and libels, to the Courts of Assize, that is, to a jury ; but, on the other hand, there was a great difficulty as to the principle of seizure when applied to prosecuted publications. I was against all seizure before, during, and even after prosecution followed by conviction. I had maintained this theory with extreme vehemence and from profound conviction in the previous year ; I brought it forward again without success ; in spite of my efforts, all I could obtain was a regularisation of the system of seizure, which made the fact of publication illusory and untrue.

I left the regulation of the periodical press to my collaborators. M. Guizot, the chief author of the third Bill, defended it with much vigour and success. On that occasion, he gave utterance to some memorable words, which have not obtained the celebrity which they merit.

‘In politics, absolute principles are only absolute in so far as they are despotic, and will not allow men to examine into them to see whether they are true.’

I shall not enter at any further length into the rest of the details of the Bill, but will refer my readers for the whole of it, the general principles and questions of detail, to the great report which I was commissioned to draw up, and to the defence of it which I made since on two solemn occasions; besides, the text itself of the principal Bill, such as I framed it, will be found amongst my papers, in its pure and strict simplicity.

All this possesses but little importance nowadays, in the voluntary state of slavery which France enjoys and in which she rejoices. Who thinks about the liberty of the press, unless it be to kick it? But, if ever this state of mind changes, if the days of 1789 and of 1830 come to be put in a clearer light, perhaps the labours of which we are speaking now will not be altogether forgotten.

This debate on the Press Bills was the bright period of the Doctrinaire Ministry. The rest of the Session was not so brilliant; however, the various proposals of the Finance Minister obtained, and what is better, deserved, general approbation. Amongst the Bills which he introduced, the one which had for its object to spread about, and to some extent to scatter abroad, the public

debt, instead of keeping it concentrated in Paris, was most attacked. He authorized the Receivers-General to pay the interest of the debt in each department, and the tax-payers to set off this interest against the land-tax. I strongly defended this measure, and pointed out its present and future advantages, especially the latter. M. Louis had not been sufficiently struck with this, and allowed that he could not have done as well as I did. Since then I have taken up these ideas on loans and taxes in a new essay, which will be found amongst my papers.

The Session closed on July 17.

It had been a brilliant, agitated and noisy one. M. de Serre had all the honours of it, although he had compromised himself twice in different ways by the boldness of his language; once declaring that the majority of the Convention had always been sound, the other time declaring that the banished regicides should never re-enter France.

I had become intimately connected with him during the course of this Session. He consulted me on the preparation of his work on the real and practical state of things in England, and, whenever requested to do so, I used to furnish him with arguments.

We, however, very nearly quarrelled about the case

of the regicides ; not that I held any other opinion than he did with regard to that crime, but because it increased the injustice of which the regicides were victims, and no one knew better than M. de Serre that their banishment was unjust ; no one had striven harder than he to prevent it. Besides that, it meant breaking, without motive or consideration, with the Liberal Party, which was at that time supporting the Ministry, and it also showed little regard for me, being as I was, in a manner, the bond of this alliance.

It was rather difficult to reconcile us ; when leaving for Switzerland, I promised, not without some reluctance, to return to sit on the committee which was entrusted with the reform of the Jury Laws.

This year I only spent two months altogether at Coppet, and I did not lose my time there ; I prepared my great work on Jury Reform, a work which carried me further than I reckoned on. On taking the work in hand, I found myself progressively led on to introduce the reform of our code of Criminal Instruction as far as regards :

The Examination of Proofs—what the English call *Evidence* ;

The Interrogation of Witnesses—what the English call *Cross-examination* ;

The Interrogation of the Accused ;

The Part the President should take in the Trial ;

The System of Pleadings before and after the Debate.

Amongst my papers will be found my minutes of this great work, the essential points of which I discussed beforehand, during the vacation of the Royal Court of Paris, with M. Girod (of the Ain), who lived near Coppet ; besides this, I was instructed and supported during this discussion by M. Rossi, M. Dumont, and M. Bellot.

In Switzerland I met this year, as simple travellers, two men whom I had known in very different positions, M. de Bubna and M. de Bassano.

M. de Bubna was at that time Governor of Lombardy. He was coming from Milan, and I do not know whether his journey to Geneva covered any political *arrière pensée*. I can say, however, that I found him very different to what he seemed in 1809, at the time of the conferences which preceded the Peace of Vienna. A cold and reserved demeanour had taken the place of that soldierly good-nature and unaffected frankness which he used to parade ; he spoke but little, and expressed himself in evasive terms about the state of Germany, and the feelings of the Northern Powers with regard to France. I did not urge the point, and

our intercourse was limited to a dinner which I gave him, and a visit which he paid me before his departure.

On the other hand, I found M. de Bassano the same as I had left him. He had lost none of his simple and pedantic admiration for his Emperor: Napoleon had never made war except from necessity; he had never been the aggressor; he was the meekest of men, and had only succumbed to treason from within and without. We reverted several times to the past, but it was in vain that I asked him the reasons why M. de Narbonne was sent to Torgau. He avoided giving an answer, although that was above all things what I wanted to get out of him.

Before returning to Paris, I made a journey, or, rather, a mere excursion, in Switzerland, which was a country full of interest for me.

On my arrival at Paris, I found our affairs in a very bad state. There was nothing unnatural in that. During the first three years which followed the Restoration, the Ministry of M. de Richelieu had struggled against the reactionary party, depending on the King, on the sensible party, or at any rate on that which followed the Court and the highest society; and lastly on the four great Courts of England, Russia, Austria

and Prussia, whose ambassadors constituted a sort of permanent congress in Paris. Now nothing of the sort existed any longer, or, rather, one might say that the reverse was the fact.

With the exception of the King, who continued to support M. Decazes both openly and in his heart, all the friends of the Richelieu Ministry attacked its successors. The ambassadors joined in the cry. The quiet and sensible portion of the *bourgeoisie* was frightened at the progress of revolutionary ideas. The only aid which the Liberal Party in its triumphant arrogance, sailing before the wind, as it was, gave to our little, timid, and frightened Ministerial Party, was to make fun of it, and quite openly to boast that very soon it would turn it out.

The state of affairs in Germany and the menacing attitude of the Holy Alliance complicated the situation. I cannot here enter into any details about the disturbances which, in all that great part of Europe, followed upon the peace of 1815, about the mutual recriminations of peoples and of Governments, about the ferment in the universities and the tumult of associations, those firebrands of the great patriotic movement of 1813; but, nevertheless, it is a fact that the success of the revolutionary spirit in France, which was more apparent

than real, reacted on the other side of the Rhine, and when the murder of Kotzebue, in the name of liberty, accompanied by the words '*Vivat Teutonia!*' had spread terror in all high places, France, with her Minister at the head, was put under a ban by all the Courts and all the sovereigns.

At the time when I arrived in Paris, all the plenipotentiaries of all the German States, small and great, were assembled at Carlsbad, in order, as was said, to provide for the common safety. M. de Metternich and M. de Hardenberg had come to an understanding at Töplitz some days previously. Nothing was known as yet about their projects, but great disquietude reigned in our camp; it certainly was quite as great as that which we inspired, and which was soon to increase still more.

The meeting of the electoral colleges had been fixed for September 11, and the state of the public feeling boded no good. A vacancy having occurred in the department of the Sarthe, Benjamin Constant was elected; this was much better, or rather much worse, if one regards the consequences, when the election of the new fifth (of the Chamber) took place. The Extreme Right having coalesced with the Extreme Left, the latter won thirty-five, the former four, and the Ministry only fifteen

seats out of fifty-four. Grégoire was elected by a majority of thirty-eight votes, of which the Extreme Right made him a present.

Almost at the same moment the resolutions adopted at Frankfort became known in Paris, as was also that terrible protocol which, throughout Germany, subordinated the constitutions of the different States, the government of the universities, that of all associations, and of the press, to the control of the Diet, by investing that body with the right of intervention, and by creating in its midst a tribunal of political inquisition.

But it soon became known that this was not all; that the Congress was adjourned till the month of November, and was then to reassemble at Vienna. It was repeated from mouth to mouth and in all political parties, whether with a good or bad intention, that explanations would be demanded from the French Government as to the course it intended to pursue; and in consequence some trembled in every limb, whilst hope brightened the eyes of others.

The Ministry, that is to say, the King, M. Decazes, and the Doctrinaire Party—for the other Ministers, except M. Decazes and M. de Serre, excellent as they

were in their own departments, were of no great account in political matters—the Ministry, I say, to define it thus, found itself placed in the unpleasant alternative of either holding out against the influence of the ambassadors and the threatening attitudes of their respective Courts, the invectives of high society, and the fears of the honest and timid *bourgeoisie*, or very greatly modifying its line of conduct by sacrificing, more or less, the Electoral Bills.

The Ministers themselves were struck—and how could they avoid being so?—by the increasing ascendancy of the Revolutionary Party in the elections, and of revolutionary ideas in the Ministerial Left, and so they thought, all things considered, that the situation was no longer tenable; that it was necessary to make the inevitable sacrifices, and reform a law which periodically endangered everything. When I say the Ministers, I mean M. Decazes, M. de Serre, and M. Portal; the three other Ministers, M. Desolle, M. Louis, and Marshal Saint-Cyr, thought that the change was more dangerous than the *status quo*; but, if I am not mistaken, their resistance might have been overcome; only one thing was wanting to that end—if they were agreed as to the evil, they must come to an agreement as to the remedy; if they were agreed as to the end

to be attained, they must come to an agreement as to the means whereby to attain it.

And this was the stumbling-block. The Doctrinaire Party itself, that very small party, whose principal strength lay in the union of its members, was split into two; on one side, M. Royer-Collard, M. Camille Jordan, M. Beugnot, M. de Barante—and on the other, M. de Serre, M. Guizot, and myself. M. Decazes and the King inclined to our views.

There was one point, however, on which experience had enlightened us: there should be no elections by departments, no more *scrutin de liste*. As far as this was concerned, there was no difficulty; but by common consent the remedy, if it were reduced within those limits, would not be enough; and it was very doubtful whether, in order to pass so restricted a measure, the number of votes which might be gained in the moderate party of the Right would counterbalance the number of votes which might be lost on the Left.

M. Royer-Collard and his followers thought they could remedy this deficiency by reducing the number of electors; that is to say, by striking off each list a certain number of voters who were least heavily taxed.

M. de Serre and I, on the contrary, thought that

the number of voters was already too limited, and we proposed to maintain it as it was by giving those who were most heavily taxed two votes instead of one, following the principle of commercial companies, where the number of votes allotted to each shareholder increases according to the number of his shares.

According to our system, the elections would have been by *arrondissements*, and each person paying yearly at least three hundred francs in taxes would have had a vote in the constituency thus established; and then, everyone who paid six hundred francs in taxes would have formed another constituency for the departmental elections.

The former of these two systems could be easily seen through; it was a mere makeshift; by curtailing each list, it cut the Gordian knot without undoing it; to exclude those who were least heavily taxed, without any other reason than the danger of their influence, seemed arbitrary and almost brutal; but if the idea of reducing the number of voters by making a certain number of years of domicile compulsory on electors in general, and the fact of having carried on this occupation for a certain number of years compulsory on all tax-paying electors—an idea which was perfectly just

and sensible—had then occurred to our minds, that system certainly would have had the preference.

In theory there existed very grave objections to our system ; in practice, as will be seen, it did not turn out badly ; but what principally alarmed timid minds was precisely that which made us value it.

The number of electoral constituencies could not well be increased without increasing the number of deputies. This would be to interfere with the Charter, and to return to the *semi-coup d'état* of the Talleyrand-Fouché Ministry, which was sacrificed by the ordinance of September 5 ; now, from the moment that hands were laid on the sacred ark, why not go on to the end ? why not reap entirely all the benefits of the enterprise ?

All enlightened men agreed in acknowledging that the number of deputies was too limited ; all acknowledged that the condition that they should be forty years old was too strict ; experience proved more and more clearly that the re-election of one fifth of the total number of members, by subjecting the Chamber to yearly changes, also, as a matter of course, must cause any Cabinet whatever to suffer from the change. ‘ The leaves fall in October,’ M. Cuvier said jokingly, ‘ and the portfolios fall in November.’ Our plan had

no other object than to combine the double vote of the more heavily taxed, to increase the number of deputies, to reduce the age to thirty, and to cause the Chamber to be entirely re-elected. This was no longer an expedient which was, of itself, rather disgraceful ; it was the inauguration of the Parliamentary system regarded in its broadest outlines. The greatness of the object and the liberality of its basis would, as we thought, amply compensate for any unpopularity which the vote might justly provoke. It was a legal *coup d'état* and a Liberal *coup de force*.

The collective Legislature, that is to say, the King and the two Chambers, were to assume, as in England, the name of Parliament.

Amongst my papers will be found the original of the plan which I had thought out and submitted to M. de Serre ; it differs, if I remember rightly, in more than one respect from the plan finally adopted, and published by M. Guizot in the second volume of his 'Memoirs ;' the preamble, as I drew it up for M. de Serre, will also be found in my papers with many copious notes on the principal questions included in this Bill.

Our disputes amongst ourselves could not remain secret. The public was promptly informed of them. In a moment, the three Ministers who persisted in

supporting the Electoral Bills became the heroes of the Liberal Party. The other three and the whole Doctrinaire Party were nothing but apostates, renegades, low intriguers who had been bought for *cash down*.

I was the first to be denounced ; I was in a manner the scapegoat. As I had recently left the Liberal ranks in which the others had never figured, I was not only a deserter with arms and baggage, but also a traitor who gave up his companions-in-arms. These were amongst the least of the little amenities with which the newspapers of the party used to comfort me daily.

I did not take much heed of it ; too little even, perhaps ; for, with a light heart, I made my position worse in other respects.

I have spoken of the Committee which was entrusted with the examination of the Bills on the reform of the jury system. I was one of the members of it, and I scandalized it.

Two questions, in fact, preoccupied, above all others, the Committee and the public : the drawing-up of the jury-lists, and the settlement as to the number of votes necessary in case of a verdict of guilty.

As to the first question, no one seemed to get beyond the simple idea of drawing up in each department a

general list, on which should be inscribed alphabetically the names of all the citizens who were liable to become jurors ; to settle legally what should constitute liability ; to draw by lot, for each meeting of the assizes, a special list, from which, in each case, the public Ministry and the accused person should have the right of challenge.

I opposed this system.

I maintained with that vehemence which I then brought to bear on all discussions that, in criminal matters, one could not plant one's self firmly on the conditions of liability ; that it was one thing to unite with five or six hundred electors in the choice of a deputy, but another to pronounce, with eleven other jurors, on the fortune, the honour, or even the life of a fellow-man ; that the special list should be taken from the general list, and that the selection should be left to the *préfet*, as it was in England to the sheriff, with the exception that the right should be reserved to the accused, in certain cases, and particularly in political matters, to challenge the list, *in globo*, and to demand its drawing by lot.

I said that my system had this advantage, that it guaranteed justice, in ordinary cases a list worthy of confidence, and in doubtful cases (political or other-

wise) an excellent list, as the *préfet* could not prevent the challenge *in globo*, except by redoubled care and impartiality.

I still maintain that my system was good, although it did not prevail; but it is easily conceivable that neither the system nor its author were popular.

As to the second question, the whole Committee thought that the *régime* which had been introduced by our Code of Criminal Instruction ought to be abolished. It is known that by the terms of this code, since a mere majority did not appear sufficient for a verdict of guilty, the court was called upon to intervene, and to vote with the jury. Thus, then, there were seventeen votes (twelve jurymen and five judges), and their majority, when thus reinforced, was deemed to be sufficient; *ergo*, it was a minority of two judges which, being added to an insufficient majority of seven jurymen, worked this miracle.

‘One can see in that,’ said M. Royer-Collard, ‘nothing but the work of statesmen in a state of delirium; out of respect, one should turn one’s eyes away.’

Certainly nothing was more true. But what was it proposed to substitute for it? A verdict of guilty by eight votes to four at least, and seven to five for an

acquittal; thus the minority would prevail over the majority, and the balance would be in favour of an acquittal.

I opposed this system. I maintained that it could not fail to produce what it did produce in 1791, and in the year V.: an habitual verdict of acquittal.

I maintained that the choice lay between two systems: the one which was more vigorous in appearance than in reality, namely, that in which the votes were merely counted: the system of the simple majority; the other more just and more practical in reality than in appearance, that in which the votes are rather weighed than counted: the system of unanimity, which was necessary either for a verdict of guilty or not guilty.

In fact, such is the natural tendency of juries to clemency, they have such a difficulty in getting over it, such is their dislike to undertake the responsibility of a serious verdict, that if we hold in favour of conviction by a relative majority, it is nearly certain that offenders will frequently get off with impunity. And to go further: according to my ideas, the adoption of such a course would seem as if we were anxious to secure frequent immunity for offenders. As for myself, I thought, with all English lawyers, that the principle

of unanimity was the very essence of the jury system ; that in ordinary cases it was the only process which counterbalanced personal precautions, flights of fancy, and logical quibbles ; the only one which in doubtful or delicate cases guaranteed a free, wide, and serious discussion amongst the jury ; the only one which made the decision depend on the severity of real convictions, rather than on the number of semi-convictions ; the only one which, by making all the jurymen responsible for the verdict, overcomes weakness, lays bare reticence, prevents disavowals and individual protestations, and maintains the dignity and the authority of justice in the eyes of the public.

I answered those who alleged that the unanimity of a jury was only a fiction, by pointing out to them the immemorial example of England and of America.

To the commonplace objection that English juries were starved to force them to come to a unanimous verdict, I replied that it was an old story, like the sale of women at market, or trial by judicial combat ; that the presiding judge at the assizes had the power, which he used when needful, to provide for the wants of the jury when their discussion extended over several hours, which was, however, rarely the case ; and, lastly, I answered those who brought up again the eternal

objection of the difference between the French and English characters, by citing the example of France herself.

It will hardly be believed that, out of a Commission consisting of twenty-five members, the majority of whom were actively-employed magistrates, I was the only one who remembered that, for twelve years (from the year V. to 1808), the principle of the unanimity of juries had been applied without difficulty and without protest throughout France, under this one condition, that when the jury could not agree in twenty-four hours, the case should be tried at the next sitting—a rare occurrence, which had never happened more than forty times a year, out of several million cases, and which would not have happened at all if the time had been a little extended. Out of eighteen hundred sentences pronounced in four years by the criminal tribunal of the Seine alone, the jury could not agree only in twenty-one cases.

When I cited these facts, my fellow-Commissioners seemed perfectly amazed ; when, to support my statement, I produced the excellent work published on this subject by M. Cadart, *Conseiller* to the Court of Cassation, they were obliged to give way ; but nevertheless, for the lawyer, I remained a dreamer, and for

the Liberal public a hardened criminal, who dreaded the acquittal of the guilty far more than the condemnation of the innocent.

It would have been much worse if time and the course of events had allowed me to produce, in its entirety, my plan of reform, which I indicated above, and in which I was going to demand :

1. That the Court of Assize should be reduced to one Judge, who was to preside and direct the case.

2. That this Judge should have no knowledge of the *instruction*, but should become acquainted with each case only at the trial.

3. That the examination of the accused should be reduced to indispensable questions : to the proof of identity.

4. That the pleadings as to facts should be transposed from the end to the beginning of the case, so that the public prosecutor having laid down the facts, as he understood them, and named the witnesses he was going to produce in support of them, should produce his witnesses at once, should examine them himself, and should then allow them to be cross-examined, one after the other, by the counsel for the defence, and that, when this first stage of the case was over, such counsel should be allowed to do the same, neither side being

allowed to speak, after the examination of the witnesses, except on some point of law.

5. That the examination of witnesses should bear only on the facts of the case, leaving out everything that had nothing directly to do with it, and, above all, the past life of the accused.

6. That witnesses on mere hearsay should be rigorously excluded.

7. That, at the close of the case, the Judge, who until then should remain silent and impassible, only interposing to maintain order, alone should speak ; that he should sum up the evidence on both sides, weighing it for and against the accused, giving his opinion on each portion of the evidence to the jury, explaining their duties to them, and also the legal meaning of the legal points referred to on one side and the other.

When I took the most enlightened members of the Commission aside and explained this system to them ; when I told them that trials were carried on thus in England and in the United States ; that nothing was easier than to introduce this system into France, contrary to our judicial habits though it might seem ; when I declared that the result would be an amount of speed, clearness, and impartiality and authority of which they had no conception, they listened to, without much believing me.

I determined, before proceeding further, to ascertain their real disposition.

I asked M. de Serre to appoint as president of the next assizes M. Girod (of the Ain), my accomplice, as has been seen, in the plan of the reform in question. I asked M. Girod to use his discretionary power in order to realize, as far as possible, the plan which we had concerted between us. No one could have performed the task better, and the attempt succeeded beyond all our hopes. Business was got through with unexampled rapidity; the examination of witnesses, reduced to essential facts, and only to questions bearing on the case, explained the case to the jury, so that they hardly took time to deliberate. The impartial and silent part played by the Judge, his forbearance towards the accused—whom he only asked formal questions, whom he did not torture by trying to make him contradict himself, by laying traps for him, by hustling him—gave his summing-up an immense influence over the jury; the summing-up was the cause of the verdict.

When witnessing that spectacle with the satisfaction of being, so to speak, the author of it, I suddenly remembered that, a few months before, I had taken old Lord Ellenborough, Chief Justice of the Court of King's

Bench, who was certainly an arch-Tory, and nearly the most illiberal of Englishmen, to this same assize-court, and that, after having been there for scarcely ten minutes, he took up his hat in a rage, and said to me, in a low voice, ‘ *For shame !* ’

He would have been satisfied with the trial over which M. Girod (of the Ain) presided : it had assumed a humane, sensible, serious character ; it had laid aside the character of *embroglio*, that melodramatic air which, in France, counterfeits and disfigures the administration of criminal justice. But, at the same time, I was not long in perceiving that the melodrama was very dear to the public ; that the lawyers very much regretted their happy moments of eloquence, and the magistrates the pleasure of torturing the accused with their tongue, seeing that they could not do it in any other way.

The attempt had no results.

My proposition had none either. I was diverted from it by other cares, which, if not greater, were at any rate more pressing.

As a matter of fact, as the project for the reform of the Electoral Laws ripened, so the disagreements between the Ministers became more pronounced ; a crisis was approaching, and, as a counter-blow, the separation between the Liberal and the Doctrinaire Parties also

became more pronounced ; the separation became complete through the action which was brought against the Society of the Liberty of the Press, of which society I must here say a few words.

I was one of its founders. It was formed, in 1818, out of the fragments of another society, which was still-born in 1817, the father of which was Manuel, and in which, full as I then was of the ardour of a novice, I had very foolishly joined. The object of this society was to collect subscriptions for the benefit of writers who were condemned for political offences. Nothing was more disrespectful towards the law, or, in fact, more illegal. I soon perceived that.

Manuel, the '*doli fabricator*,' was the sponsor of M. Lafitte, who was to act as treasurer for the subscriptions. He had drawn up the programme ; we had circulated it ; but M. Lafitte having disavowed Manuel, we had our shame for our pains. We withdrew the programme, and the society died without having scarcely lived. From its ashes we formed a new society, whose object was legal ; we intended to discuss amongst ourselves the conditions of sound legislation on the Press. But this time, also, our association did not fulfil the legal conditions. Being more than twenty in number, and not being provided with a

formal authorization, the authorities would have been justified in interfering with us ; but, as the custom of allowing meetings more or less similar to those which were held now at the house of one of us, now at the house of the other, had been introduced for some time, the Ministry of M. de Richelieu closed its eyes ; and later the Ministry of M. Dessolle, to whom we gave some good support in the great discussion about the Press Bills, protected us openly.

All went well as long as the Dessolle Ministry itself went on well ; but as soon as it divided, our society did the same. My friends and I were in a minority, a usual occurrence with the Doctrinaire Party ; we left off attending the meetings, and others took our place. Our opinion on electoral reform was attacked there with the greatest vehemence : M. Decazes and M. de Serre were attacked by the same blow ; and they, finding that they had enough unavoidable trouble on their hands without seeking for any gratuitous trouble, caused the society to be warned to cease its meetings, under the penalty of being prosecuted.

Thereupon there ensued great stir and uproar, and oaths to resist to martyrdom—in short, all the demonstrations which are regarded as indispensable in similar cases. I was loudly called upon to explain myself, and

to answer as to what conduct ought to be observed. I very simply replied that there could be no two views ; that as the society had no legal right to exist, as soon as the toleration with which it had been treated was no longer exercised towards it, there was no alternative but to submit, except that it was open to us to request by legal means the abrogation of Article 291 of the Penal Code. I was called upon to have my answer printed. I did so in a few lines ; and I waited with perfect calmness for the flood of insults and recriminations which the Liberal newspapers soon poured out upon me.

I shall here close this cursory, though rather long, sketch of a year, most fertile in events of importance both for the country and for myself, and give extracts from a diary which my wife wrote every evening at that period. Those extracts are not quite so dry as what precedes, and nothing can give a more exact idea of the state of society and of the working of men's minds at the time :

‘ *Sept.* 19.—I expected, after seeing the elections in the papers, to see everyone in a state of excitement, . . . especially when I remembered that last year the election of M. de la Fayette had upset the

whole of France, and nearly the whole of Europe. Well, everything is quiet, and almost asleep. . . . The King has acted better respecting the election of Grégoire than he did respecting that of M. de la Fayette. . . .

‘One is so used to agitation that one hardly feels it any more.

‘Those people who said nothing under Bonaparte, who hardly raised their voice in 1815, cry out to-day against a powerless Government. They will not forego the merit of displaying courage to-day any more than they wished to forfeit the security afforded them previously by their cowardice. They are like the man who boasted of having cut off the head of a giant who had already lost his head. . . .

‘Benjamin Constant is taking a certain Goget, a journalist of the Sarthe, about with him in Paris, and the journalist treats him without the least ceremony. This man Goget said, before him, to M. Decazes: “Had I been eligible, I should have got myself elected instead of M. Constant.”’

‘*Sept. 25.*—M. Ramond, who came to see me this morning, complained of the depravity of the country. “The nation,” he said, “complains of the Chambers and of the Ministry; all that really is the country

itself; it is like an ill-looking woman who complains of her looking-glass.”

‘*Sept. 30.*—Madame de Sainte-Aulaire said to me this morning that M. Decazes is very unhappy, especially about the silence of his friends. . . . When one remembers his immense popularity of last year; these very same newspapers, which held to him as to their saviour; the Stock Exchange, whose funds had fallen very low for fear of his overthrow, one cannot help reflecting on the rapidity of this change, and on the want of delicacy on the part of those who now overwhelm him for the same faults which they knew so well when they were almost at his feet.

‘What France wants is not morality; it is life, internal sap. One might sometimes think that the whole nation is like the *prefectures* in small towns, which have nothing but the front. If there was nobody to look at the French people, they would cease to exist, to such a degree do they exist only for others.

‘The Congress of Carlsbad has just established a general censorship of the Press in Germany. That measure has frightened people here, for it is well known that the eyes of the whole of Europe are turned towards us, out of distrust.’

‘*Oct. 1.*—M. de Montlosier, who has just returned

from Germany, says that all the students at the universities lead a regular and even austere life, do not gamble or swear, and do not fight duels any more, and carry their self-imposed severity so far as not to wear shirts, on account of its being an effeminate custom. This nation, which is enthusiastic without being passionate, is a very extraordinary thing, and all the more extravagant because it never allows itself to be disturbed in its chimeras through being carried away by realities, and because it calculates its dreams as one calculates one's business, and calmly reasons about absurdities.

'A certain M. Hervey, a subaltern Liberal, came to lunch with us yesterday I noticed that he possessed that taste for arbitrary measures so noticeable in all the complaints of his party against the Government. He denounced the missionaries, and said :

' "Indeed, they would not have been tolerated even under the old *régime*."

' "For that very reason," I replied, "we must tolerate them now" The Liberals are angry because the King does not give places at Court to the men of the Revolution.

' "They worry me," said Benjamin Constant, the other day, "to know whether the King is sincere ; what the devil does that matter to you ? Is the King your

mistress? One of these fine days they will kill themselves, like Werther, because they doubt the sincerity of his love."

'Victor is very much pleased with yesterday's sitting of the Commission on Juries. He has carried his point, that the examination of the accused should be omitted; he hopes that the Bill will be a good one.'

'M. Guizot told me that he was very uneasy about the state of affairs in Europe; that the different sovereigns had expressed themselves very unfavourably towards France, especially the Emperor Alexander. All this consensus of universal censure is directed against us like a battery.'

'Oct. 2.—The uneasiness about European affairs is very great. That court of investigation which is established at Mayence seems to be directed against France. However, the sovereigns have avoided mentioning the word. What is feared here is, that they may make some proposal to the King to join that alliance, and to change his Ministers. The Emperor Alexander said: "We must draw a cordon round France, and raise a barrier between it and Europe, for it is a pestilential country." His conduct is pitiable; all his good sentiments were nothing but whims.

'It is now fashionable to run down the Ministry.

‘Folly at home and the fears aroused by the position taken up by the Powers make the situation very critical. France is not in a state to bear a war.

‘Grégoire has sent us his justification, which justifies nothing ; but Auguste has answered him, begging him to send in his resignation for the sake of the public interest.

‘The hobby of our Liberals is economy ; in liberty they see nothing but a basin of cheap soup.

‘M. Decazes is very low-spirited. Madame acted as sponsor at the christening of his child yesterday, and grumbled all the time.

‘M. Decazes’ opinions are neither for nor against liberty ; his taste is rather for arbitrary power, which he would use mildly and reasonably ; but at the same time he has a wonderful talent for action, and although the Ministry is more Liberal than he is, he always guides it, and when it comes to a question of action in any way opposed to his own, it is he again that acts, because he is the only one who has any activity.

‘M. de Serre is very firm ; he never bends, but he has no spirit of enterprise ; he remains firm in his place like a rock, yet, like a rock, he never advances.

‘I have had M. de Serre to dinner with two or three English lawyers. He is at once blunt and timid in his manners, and has much more of the Englishman than

of the Frenchman about him. I had a great deal of trouble to get up a conversation between him and the Hon. Mr. Ward [afterwards Lord Dudley], although Mr. Ward desired nothing better.

‘M. de Serre is tall; at first his face is not pleasant; there is something timid in his eyes, which contrasts very strongly with the very pronounced expression of his other features; but when one looks at him closely, one discovers something sincere and sensible in his eyes. He is wonderfully simple, and he is unpolished, but not arrogant, in his manners. “The little I saw of Madame de Staël,” he said to me, “pleased me extremely; she was very kind to me, and invited me to her house; but I thought I should be lost in the crowd, or that, if she saw me, I could not take upon myself to say anything.”

‘He spoke to me of my mother’s book. He agreed with her on very many points—amongst others, on the necessity of an aristocratic element.

‘“That is a point,” he said, “on which I do not agree with your doctrine.”

‘“But,” I answered him, “one cannot create the aristocracy.”

‘“Certainly not, but one must take care of what remains of it. I have read scarcely anything,” he

added, "and I have no more time for reading at present; but I profit by the reading of others, and by that of your mother above all."'

'Oct. 6.—On Wednesday evening, M. Villemain was most amusing. His mind rather resembles Benjamin Constant's; it is impossible for him to speak seriously for two minutes together, and he has an inconceivable awkwardness of body, just as if his limbs also did not hang properly together, and as if, at the very first misunderstanding, they were quite ready to part company, each going its own way. . . .'

'Oct. 9.—M. Guizot told me that M. Decazes was quite incapable of betraying people with whom he was connected; that he did not like the opinions of the Doctrinaires, but that he was very fond of them personally. He is a very peculiar being; he is absolutely devoted to the King, and would follow him to Kamtschatka; he has no taste for liberty.

'In the evening, Benjamin came to call on me with M. de la Fayette. The conversation turned on Grégoire. We spoke of the proposal to exclude him from the Chamber. Benjamin Constant and M. de la Fayette exclaimed against it: they said that that would cause him to be re-elected in twenty departments.

‘M. de Barante came to see me and was exceedingly nice ; he spoke to me about the general weariness and his own dislike for his position.

“ ‘This country,” he said to me, “is a country where everything loses its interest, because everything is talked about. If one knew that the end of the world was coming, the event would be so much talked about that the excitement caused by the news would have subsided by the end of a week.”

‘He spoke to me of M. Royer-Collard’s idea, of proposing to exclude Grégoire from the Chamber as a regicide. I pointed out to him the disadvantages of such a course.

“ ‘Quite so,” he replied ; “but it might do very well as the beginning of a line of action, if the Ministry was prepared to pursue a more energetic course, to propose to double the number of the members of the Chamber, and to alter the limit of age ; this double blow might have its advantages.”

‘Victor does not think so ; he believes it would be a very dangerous precedent, and that it would be exceedingly wrong to set principles aside for a cause which has now nothing to defend it.

‘The families of those who were condemned at Grenoble have sought for permission from the Conseil

d'État to prosecute General Donnadiou The amusing part of the matter is, that the seven widows who are seeking for justice for the death of their husbands have all married again.

“ ‘The mistake of M. Decazes,’ M. Guizot said, ‘is always to try to cure great evils with small remedies ; he thinks that everything can be cured with herb-tea.’ ”

‘Oct. 18.—The successor of M. de Rivière has been appointed. But General Dessolle has never had the courage to tell him of it, and has allowed him to return to Constantinople.

“ ‘There are no more men,’ said M. Guizot ; ‘every morning I open the *Almanach Royal* to look for Ministers . . . This lack of men, this death-like breeze which has passed through the country, is a very extraordinary thing. The *ultras* are quite right when they say that everything tends to death, but they are dead themselves ; they are like the fool who said of his fellows : ‘They are all fools, but I, who am the Eternal Father, will judge them rightly.’ It is vanity which has dried up all the living roots of this country.’ ”

‘I asked M. de Barante whether M. Royer-Collard would not enter the Ministry.

“ ‘Some one is wanted,’ he replied, ‘who has authority in the Chamber, and he is the only one who has any.’ ”

““ But where are the difficulties ?”

““ They spring from M. Royer-Collard himself.”

‘ The *Journal des Débats* announces that the Royalists will make a scene in order to prevent Grégoire from taking the oath.

‘ M. Comte, whom we saw two days ago, told us that he let his hands drop when he read all that Grégoire had written. Can anyone conceive that a man should have been attacked with such fury without anyone taking the trouble to find out the facts of his past life. All the honest patriots are like the Ministers with regard to the King; they say :

““ If we become unpopular, we shall become discredited, and shall no longer be able to do any good.”

‘ The Doctrinaires and their paper, *Le Courier*, are thoroughly hated. M. Lafitte said to Auguste :

““ If I had had any inclination to leave the Right, *Le Courier* would have deterred me.””

‘ Oct. 22.—M. Constant came last night; he showed great anxiety concerning Grégoire, and deadly fear as to the issue. He told me one thing which distresses me very much, and that is that Grégoire was really very much shaken and very undecided, that he wished to be persuaded to send in his resignation, but that

he had received a letter from M. d'Argenson begging him not to move in the matter. "When one sees," M. Constant said, "how distressed this wretched man Grégoire is, one understands that, like the rest, he has forgotten his own words."'

'Oct. 23.—Auguste himself went to see Grégoire yesterday. He read the letter of M. d'Argenson with his own eyes; it bore his signature alone, but in a postscript he added: "Messieurs Demarçay and Fradet unite with me in all that I have written to you." The following passage is taken word for word from the letter:

"Very dear and honourable colleague, we have been told that some persons have been urging you to send in your resignation, but were you to do so, you might discourage the other departments from rising to that height of patriotism to which the department of Isère has risen. At the moment when the Congress of Carlsbad threatens all patriots, they cannot dispense with such a leader as you are."

'This wretched man, Grégoire, received Auguste with tears in his eyes, thanked him for his letter, and begged him to let him have all the information which he himself might obtain.

'Victor made up his mind to go and see the man for

himself, and he asked Benjamin Constant to come and breakfast with him.

‘ Benjamin arrived too late, quite white and nervous because he did not exactly know how to gainsay his speech of the previous day. He stammered a few words, and ended by saying, “If twenty members of the Left will go to Grégoire’s, I will go ; otherwise, I will not.” He added that, if he were to demand Grégoire’s resignation, he should not be elected the next year. I tried to calm him, by talking to him about the miserable position in which the unhappy man was placed. “ Ah ! as for that,” he said to me, “ if I were his friend, it would be all very well ; but as it is, I should not care in the least were he to die of grief.”

‘ Lanjuinais came to dinner, and we witnessed another comedy. He is a man who is as brave as a lion, as firm as a rock, but who has the most confused brain that ever was. Thus, we had declamations on the Jesuits and on the Missionaries, old speeches delivered before the Convention, quotations from the Gospels ; his ideas were inconceivably incoherent, and he constantly went from one subject to another. He began by attacking the imperial printing-office, then he went on to a polyglot Bible, to Sanscrit, to the East, etc. We took him aside to speak about Grégoire, but then he

began to inveigh against the want of good faith of Pitt and of Coburg, against the *émigrés*, mixing all this up with Christian humility, saying that Grégoire was in the wrong, but that it would be cowardly to send in his resignation ; springing from one end of the room to the other, talking at one moment in a very low, at the next in a very high voice, and putting his arm round our waists. At last, after letting him go on talking for two hours, quoting Latin wrongly, etc., Auguste at length managed to tempt him with the idea that Grégoire might write a capital letter when sending in his resignation.

‘*Sunday morning.*—The Government has just dissolved the Société de la Presse,* which had fallen into thoroughly low hands. On Monday morning I saw Benjamin Constant, who told me that he was delighted at it. To day he has printed a protest in the *Re-nommée* He is trying to embarrass Victor by saying that he never withdrew from that society, being quite sure that from the very moment that it was dissolved, he would not go and disavow it. Benjamin Constant’s articles were so well aimed, he so questioned Victor, that he thought himself obliged to answer them. This he did in a very short letter, but one which settles the question. The Liberals are furious.

‘M. de Saint-Albin came to see him yesterday, and

* Press Association.

told him that people were very much surprised at his demanding Grégoire's resignation. His reply was : " I have accepted the name of *Jacobin*, so long as it was applied only to M. de la Fayette and to M. d'Argenson ; but if Grégoire is to be one of them, I will have nothing more to do with it. I mean to go and ask him to send in his resignation, and I wish this to be known."

' Grégoire formally declared that he would not do this.

' On Tuesday Victor dined at M. Guizot's with M. Decazes. He found that he was thoroughly determined to follow out a clear and firm course, as he rightly appreciated the situation, and wished to remedy it energetically. It is their positive intention to introduce an Election Bill which shall give to the two Chambers the name of Parliament ; shall limit the duration of each Parliament to seven years ; shall double the number of Deputies, fix their age at thirty instead of forty ; and modify the manner of elections by dividing them partly into elections by *arrondissement* and partly by *department*.'

' Nov. 3.—Yesterday I went to see Talma take the part of Augustus in *Cinna* ;* it was really wonderful. It was simplicity itself. He speaks to Cinna just as we should speak to some ungrateful person in our own room, sitting on one of our own chairs. Till now I

* Corneille's famous play.

never fully understood all the beauty that there is in the character of Augustus. Talma plays it like an old man who is kind because he is tired of what is bad, fearing lest he should be isolated, and forgiving, not so much from magnanimity as from the fear of being forsaken, and from the wish no longer to be obliged to listen to reproaches which are only too well founded; feeling remorse, but such remorse as is quite compatible with absolute power, with a position in which the slightest acts are looked upon as sublime: it is a thoroughly philosophical spectacle, and one which Talma has conceived in all its force.'

'*Nov. 10.*—We are now in a more disturbed situation than we were last year. Three Ministers, M. de Serre, M. Decazes, and M. Portal, are in favour of strong measures; the other three are against them. Gouvion Saint-Cyr said, "Wait till my army is organized, and, if the Jacobins make a move, I will throw them out of the windows." M. Louis is frightened of breaking with the Left, and M. Dessoie is frightened of everything. . . . M. de Serre came to see Victor, and asked him to join the Ministry. Victor explained to him how unpleasant this would be for him; how his late conduct would be attributed to ambition; how he should frighten the Centre; his few

claims, his youth, his slight authority, etc. M. de Serre felt all this; but his answer was that the present necessities were too urgent to allow everyone to follow the usual course. At last Victor told him that, if it were absolutely necessary that he should join the Ministry to settle the balance in favour of the great measure, he would consent to do so, but that nothing except absolute necessity would induce him to do so.

‘Paris is in a state of ferment. The report is going about that M. Decazes is in treaty with the *ultras*, and that M. de Serre is betraying Louis XVIII.

‘We have seen M. d’Argenson. As usual, he has shown himself perfectly kind and amiable. He fully entered into Victor’s position, and—this struck me as being strange—he advised him to join the Ministry. In the main he is truly glad at heart, but when he is asked whither he is tending, he cannot tell you.’

‘Nov. 17.—On Sunday M. de Serre came to see Victor again, to talk with him once more about the Ministry. He told him that their plan was to choose the most honourable men of all parties, and that, consequently, they had thought of M. Roy, of Victor, and of M. Royer-Collard; that they had even sent an express to M. de Richelieu. Victor still gave him the same answer as before.

‘M. Royer-Collard came this evening, with the intention, I suppose, of seeing Victor, who was not at all well, and in bed. He laid down the law as usual, and said to us :

“The Ministry must be refitted. I do not think that any good will result from all this. . . .”

“But,” I replied, “the selections may be good.”

“But,” he answered, “even good men may be too exacting.”

‘He expresses his doubts in the most dogmatical manner, and his uncertainty about the real state of affairs is most emphatic.

‘M. Guizot does not know what has been written to M. de Richelieu, so that they are mutually deceiving each other.

‘M. Royer-Collard had been to see M. Decazes, and offered him very hard terms. He began by saying to him :

“I shall not accept, if you are to remain as master.”

‘M. Decazes remained very pensive ; he did not like all this in the least.’

‘Nov. 19.—M. Royer-Collard has been to see Victor, and spent part of the morning with him. The conditions which he laid down were very hard.

‘ “I wish,” he said, “that the flag of this Ministry be the moral expulsion of M. Decazes.”

‘ He does not want M. Decazes to remain in office as President of the Council. He also will hear neither of M. Mollien, nor of M. Pasquier, nor of M. Portal.

‘ M. de Serre seemed to reckon on Victor’s co-operation—a fact which troubled the latter very much.

‘ “I cannot bear to seem to hide myself,” he said.

‘ It was a long time before he went to sleep.

‘ Yesterday morning, the 18th, he came into my room with a long letter, in which he explained all the reasons which led him to believe that he should damage the cause.

‘ At six o’clock M. de Serre came. He had sent Victor’s letter to M. Decazes, who had taken it to the King, and he brought the King’s answer to M. Decazes. It is a very gracious letter, very well written, and evidently intended to be shown. Victor is thoroughly delighted at it.

‘ *Nov. 20.*—The public agitation is very great. The stockbrokers are disconcerted; the excitement is great; funds are falling. People are frightened at the measure, and at the names which propose it.

‘ M. Mollien came this morning to ask Victor’s advice, and he persuaded him to accept office.

‘M. de Barante tells me that M. Royer-Collard is very angry, and that he cannot be pacified. After a long conversation, he finished by saying to M. de Serre :

‘“*Very well; we shall perish, and that will be another solution of the difficulty.*”

‘The country has never been in such a state of confusion. The party of Ternaux is now frightened at the new Ministry, after having been frightened at everything.

‘Everything that M. de Serre says seems to me to be of value. It appears to me that his words come from and touch the heart.’

‘Nov. 24.—M. d’Argenson dined with us yesterday. Victor spoke with him very earnestly. He listens most attentively, enters into all the ideas of the person who is talking to him, and then does not alter his opinion in the least. He kept on saying to us :

‘“The object of all this is to have a docile national representation.”

‘The Centre of the Chamber offers to change the Electoral Laws without interfering with the Charter ; it also offers to grant a censorship of the Press. This proves that it is not the love of liberty which restrains it, but fear, a Protean feeling which assumes all sorts of shapes.’

‘*Nov.* 29.—I have been to the royal sitting. These ceremonies are always impressive. The peers came in their robes. Nothing is so ridiculous as these quite new costumes of bygone days ; it is like the artificial ruins in English gardens. The King had great difficulty in walking. His entrance was cold and solemn. He began his speech in a nervous voice, but the speech is excellent. The law is laid down in it in clear, firm, and loyal terms. His language was patriotic. He said, “Our institutions, our country . . .” He had never put himself so much in touch with his people. But he hesitated ; his delivery was poor ; he corrected himself at the very moment when most vigour was required ; he trembled when speaking of his unshakeable decision. He was badly attended : the Keeper of the Seals, who was ill, was not present.

‘*M.* Decazes seemed very unhappy ; Grégoire was not present, and he was not called upon to take the oath.’

‘*Dec.* 1.—I think that the speech has had a good effect.’

‘*Dec.* 3.—Yesterday *M.* de Talleyrand dined with me. At present he is very well disposed towards Victor, and he courts him very much. He speaks like a prince, that is to say, whatever he says tells, no matter what may be its real value. During all this

time I was trying to detect what my mother had told me of the grace of M. de Talleyrand, and I had some difficulty in fixing so much charm and brightness on that grave and worn-out face.

““If they wish to pass the Bill,” he said, “the Ministry must be decided not to accept any amendment; there must be no negotiations, and no intrigues.” He repeated this twenty times to each person, adding: “That is what must be done; that is the way to succeed.”

‘We afterwards spoke of M. de Serre; he praised his talents. It was said that M. de Serre often hesitated and sought for words when he was in the tribune. M. de Talleyrand said: “One is always at liberty to seek for one’s words, as long as one finds them.” He possesses a sort of power. He is an old wreck of the *ancien rgime*, and the past, unworthy though it be, always preserves a certain empire over men’s minds.

‘I am very sorry that I was not present at the sitting of the 6th; it was very stormy; Grégoire was expelled amidst cries of “*Vive le roi!*” The first part of the sitting, it is said, resembled the Convention, and the other that of 1815. The people in the galleries loudly expressed their feelings. It is a very funny thing to hear, nowadays, all the sophisms of power in

the mouths of Liberals : “ not to go too far,” “ to change nothing,” etc.

‘ M. de Chauvelin, M. Constant, and M. Dupont (of the department of the Eure) were appointed as members of the Commission on the Address. M. Royer-Collard voted for M. de Chauvelin. M. de Barante said that he was the pandemonium of arguments.

‘ M. Molé made a very witty remark to me : “ Vous ferez un coup d’état, parce que vous êtes plus téméraires que décidés.”*’

‘ What a situation ours was ! We were placed between two obstacles, being on one hand bound to people who are perhaps deceiving us, and, on the other, fearful of damaging liberty whilst striving after order. Victor practises what he calls the great principle in politics, that is, to help the weaker ; the minority calls for justice.

‘ M. Decazes is ill. M. de Serre gnashes his teeth because he cannot go out. M. Beugnot does not dare to leave his room.

‘ The Commission on the Address could not agree ; each of the three parties drew up its own, which was rejected by the two others.

* ‘ You will bring about a *coup d’état*, because you have more daring than decision.’

‘In France liberty acts as a mask for every secret passion ; instead of diffusing light all round, it only serves to hide it.

‘Last Sunday I saw poor Camille Jordan—a man who is worthy of all admiration. He is so ill that he can no longer sit down ; he suffers excruciating pains, and yet he has never been more zealous for the public good, or more full of curiosity and ardour ; his mind is in its prime youthful vigour, and at the same time full of maturity and experience.

‘It is now a question of proroguing the Chambers at once, and going on with the six-twelfths of the Budget, already granted, until March 1.’

‘*Dec.* 26.—Yesterday’s sitting was astonishing ; the Ministry had an immense majority ; one cannot tell what to depend upon with this Chamber.

‘M. de Chateaubriand says that the Royalists will perish through excess of virtue, like one dies from eating too much melted fat.

‘It seems quite clear that there is a split in the camp of the *ultras*. M. de Montmorency is at the head of the moderates, and M. de Chateaubriand at the head of the others.’

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